THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XXIII. ROBERT BONNER, { PUBLISHER, 90 BEEKMAN ST. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1867. TERMS. { $3 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 34.

POSSESSION.

BY WILLIAM H. BURLEIGH.

The sweetest word that ever was heard—
From the sweetest lips the sweetest word
Has brimmed my heart to its overflow
With a bliss as pure as the angels know;
And my soul, so long bowed sadly down,
Assumes the sceptre and the crown
And rises up with a regal will!
Oh, fateful word! my life to fill
With a larger life and more divine—
For it makes me hers and it makes her mine,
And brings again to our unsealed eyes
The beauty and glory of Paradise!
The earth so fair seems fairer far,
And a holier light have sun and star;
The blue of the sky is more divine,
And a deeper music is in the pine;
The wave that breaks on the pebbly shore
Hath a murmur of love ne'er heard before,
And the brooks laugh out with a merrier glee
As they flash through the valleys away to the sea—
For Nature feels to the inmost core
Of her great warm heart the joy that thrills
Through the life that love with its new life fills,
Since she, the lass of the golden tress,
Wearing the crown of her loveliness,
My beautiful Bess, my "good queen Bess,"
Hath spoken the word that makes her more;
That makes her dearer than ever before,
That makes her mine to love and adore
For ever and ever and evermore!

What a glow of light on the grasses lay,
  What music stirred in the tasselled corn,
What fragrance breathed from the new-mown hay,
  As over the fields I passed at morn!
The birds were as merry as birds could be,
As they sung and flew from tree to tree;
I am sure their songs were meant for me,
For they must have seen, with a glad surprise,
The soft love-light that brimmed mine eyes,
And the new-born bliss within my soul;
For its depths were stirred by a single word
From faltering lips half-guessed, half-heard,
And a gush of joy beyond control,
A keen, sharp joy that half seemed pain,
With its sudden light filled all my brain—
(I think 'twill never be dark again)
As a hand dropt, trembling, into mine,
And a sweet, low voice just murmured—"*Thine!*"

NORWOOD;

OR

VILLAGE LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1867, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAPTER XLVII.

AFTER FRUITS.

Had an entire stranger entered Dr. Wentworth's family he would scarcely have suspected that a great sorrow had befallen it. He might remark a tenderness manifested by one toward another, unusual even in the circle of affectionate people. The voice of singing was there, but the music flowed deep, carrying few bubbles upon its surface. Even mirth re-asserted its wholesome sway, but it was manifested more by the dewy freshness given to conversation than by a positive efflorescence of its own. In this case, happily, sorrow worked upon the moral sentiments and developed a serene and high joy! There was no drug in it deadening to the sensibility. All of life had become richer by what it had lost. The heavens seemed nearer. The lightest duties and most trivial offices of daily life seemed colored with celestial hues. When Death is interpreted it means Life. Its ministry is to enrich life, not to rob it. It takes away the flesh, but pours back along the way upon which the departing spirit went a flood of light and influence which heightens the colors and doubles the value of all that remains behind. The worth of common things depends upon the sentiments which we have twined around them. Sorrows are gardeners, and plant flowers along waste places, and teach vines to cover barren heaps. The common duties of life, unblessed, are but as fences of stone, or timber; but blessed with sorrow, each stake carries its twining morning glory, and mosses picture the stones, and glowing ampelopsis tufts the walls with its autumnal red.

Rose and her mother were conferring in whispers.

"Ask him," said Mrs. Wentworth.

"Father, what is your feeling about—about—our going into mourning?"

A grave smile barely tinged the doctor's face as he replied, scarcely lifting his face from the book which he read:

"It is proper, my daughter, that we should mourn when we are afflicted."

"Father!—you know I did not mean that. Shall we put on the customary mourning clothes?"

"If it is indispensable to your comfort. Do not do it to please me—unless you follow the Scriptural example."

"What example is there, father?" said Rose.

"Read in the twentieth chapter of John," replied the doctor, "and about the middle of the chapter;—let me see—there it is—the eleventh and twelfth."

Rose read aloud—"But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre——"

"Yes," interrupted her father, "that is too often our way in grief—we 'stoop down' and we 'look into the sepulchre.' Except by a miracle, they that look into the grave for their dead will find darkness, and gloom, and decay. But I interrupted you—the part that I meant is yet to come."

Rose resumed—"And saw two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain——"

"Old Francia, before Raffaelle's day," said Dr. Wentworth, "in a noble Pietà, which is now in the National Gallery in London, represents an angel at the head of Christ, with the expression of *hope*, as one who was looking forward into the future, while the other angel at the feet wears the sorrowful look of one who *remembers* the past. The idea is very beautiful. Since I first saw it I have always interpreted this passage in John's gospel in the same way. Two angels, Hope and Memory, but both in shining white, sat in Christ's sepulchre. The angel of sorrow wore white as much as his fellow. Demonic sorrow should wear black; but Christian faith shows us angels yet hovering at the grave's mouth. Our Arthur is not sleeping there. He is awake, and in Heaven. Why should I wear black for him? His life was Christian and beautiful. He died as a pure offering to Duty and Patriotism—why should I wear black? I thank God for giving me that child. His life was a prolonged mercy to me. I thank God that he has so taken him from me, that he is more present than ever, present in everything, and everywhere, pure, sainted, most beautiful.—Why should I put on black?"

"I think," said Mrs. Wentworth, "that one is shielded by mourning costume from careless inquiries, and from unfeeling intrusion of people."

"No doubt," said her husband, "in a few instances this may be true. But the advantage at best is slight. Well-meaning blunderers are not to be cured so easily."

"But I think, my dear," replied Mrs. Wentworth, "that it is congenial to one's feelings, in a great sorrow, to avoid bright colors, and to be clothed in darker ones."

"That is a matter of education. In so far as high colors have come to signify gayety and pleasure, there may be a good reason for dismissing them. If one would mark one's grief, why not by the color chosen by the Bible to express spiritual things? White signifies purity, triumph, spiritual gladness, and this ought not to be uncongenial to the moods of Christian grief."

"And yet, in the public mind," said his daughter, "there is a seeming want of respect to the memory of the departed, if we make no difference in our ways."

"It is not the custom of our people to symbolize their feelings by a change of dress, with this solitary exception. If a man becomes bankrupt, or has his house burned down, or loses heavily in commercial operations, or has a son in disgrace, or a child misled by evil company, or any other grieffful experience, he does not change his garb. The one solitary and exceptional case is bereavement! But there is in domestic sorrow a delicacy, or ought to be, which should shrink from an ostentatiousness such as mourning apparel cannot fail to have. No one has a right so to express his sorrows as to intrude them upon every eye wherever he goes. Custom has long justified it; otherwise, it would be esteemed an indelicacy for one to be a walking advertisement of one's own private griefs. But, even if one were permitted to announce this one side of domestic experience by change of garb, the question still remains, whether expression should be given to the weakness of natural feeling, or the triumph of Christian faith? Whether we should symbolize the darkness of the grave as unenlightened nature shows it, or the grave made luminous by the triumph of our Saviour and the glories of immortality beyond it? We may be sure there is something wrong, in a Christian community where death is surrounded with associations of terror, where the young are reared to a horror of the sepulchre, where present grief rises up like a dark cloud and shuts out the heaven, where—in sermon, services, conversation, and dress—every thing conspires to shroud death and the grave with darkness. Has sorrow a right to be selfish? May it bear false witness against immortality? Has a Christian under bereavement a right to declare by his conduct, 'There is no light in the grave, none beyond it, and no comfort for the bereaved but only black, black, black sorrow!' I never meet one muffled in black from head to foot, without a certain horror. The smell of crape is to me like the smell of a charnel-house!

"Had it ever occur to mourners to ask, what, if those for whom I grieve were to speak to me out of their blissful rest in heaven, would be their choice—that I should be shrouded like one in despair, or robed as one who mourns, but with Christian hope?"

Nothing further was replied, and the subject dropped.

A great change had taken place in Rose. At length, she had an object in life, which was of sufficient magnitude and interest to develop and occupy all her powers. Hitherto her life had been bright, tranquil, and happy. Yet, at times, there had crept upon her a deep sense of dissatisfaction with herself. What was she accomplishing? To wait in elegant idleness for some domestic settlement, violated both her moral sense and her delicacy. And yet, what was she doing commensurate with the powers which had been entrusted to her and the culture which they had received?

She had revolved in her mind many projects without settling upon any. At one time, she was seriously bent upon leaving home and seeking a place in the South or West as a teacher, and desisted from the purpose only on seeing how much pain it would give her parents. She also revolved plans of teaching at or near home, but found that she could do it only by dispossessing others who depended upon teaching for their bread. Sometimes she thought of art as a field of usefulness, but was convinced that in no other department of life was usefulness so dependent upon the very highest talents as in the ministry of the beautiful.

But the war, which was now disclosed, opened a field for every power which she possessed. Her brother's early fall seemed to be a call to her to enlist in the same cause, and make his place good. And though, at first, she did not see the particular way in which she could enter this field of humanity, yet she never for a moment doubted that she was called of God, and that He would, in His own time and manner, open her path before her.

With her mother she did not speak of her intentions. To her father she disclosed her wishes, and when his natural shrinking from the thought of the toil and exposure were overcome, he began to aid Rose in her preparation. He placed in her hands works or parts of works that would give her such general knowledge of physiology and of therapeutics as would furnish a proper basis for right nursing. In conversations, he gave her also much information upon gunshot wounds, surgery, and particularly on military surgery. He enlarged upon hospital treatment—air, cleanliness, and the medicinal effect of cheerfulness and moral sentiments. Rose's industry was unremitting. Her power of acquisition, always remarkable, was stimulated to the highest degree. She soon conceived a love of the study for its intrinsic interest, and brought to the study of medicine an enthusiasm, an apprehensiveness, a tact and delicacy which few medical students possess.

["THAT IS TOO OFTEN OUR WAY IN GRIEF—'WE STOOP DOWN' AND WE 'LOOK INTO THE SEPULCHRE.'"]

Not content with books, she insisted upon riding with her father, at least enough to wear off that shrinking from suffering so natural to a sensitive nature.

"Remember, Rose," her father would say, "that you are to be a nurse, not a surgeon. For the active practice of medicine, or the performance of surgery, you know enough to be only a good charlatan! But with modesty and your good sense, you know enough to aid you materially in nursing."

During the summer Norwood, in common with every town and village in the North, was filled with zeal, both in raising the quota required of Massachusetts by the call for a half-million of men, and in providing for the soldiers' comfort in the camp and for necessaries for sickness and wounds. Old linen came to a good market! Bandages of all widths, and in endless quantities, were provided. Lint was scraped in every house. Sick dresses, drawers, shirts and stockings, held high jubilee, and found themselves in great honor. Sewing circles in every church! sewing circles in almost every other house! sewing circles on every day of the week, except Sunday; and even then, there was unrebuked talk about sewing circles!

About the middle of this summer was organized the most magnificent voluntary charity ever recorded. Experience had found, in every nation, that the Medical Department of the army, however thoroughly organized and faithfully served, had, by virtue of its connection with the machinery of the army, a certain formality and precision which was inconsistent with elasticity and suppleness. It was a wheel in a complicated machine, and its revolutions must be determined by its relations to its fellow wheels.

The SANITARY COMMISSION undertook not to supersede, but to supplement and assist, the Medical Department of the army. Its career is as notable as any single feature of the war. In no other nation has the compassion of the people for their soldiers resulted in so wonderful an organization, which, by voluntary contributions from citizens, disbursed during four years, of money and material, between twenty and thirty millions of dollars!

It was October before Rose let her mother know of her intentions. She had prepared herself to meet any objection, and adduce any persuasion necessary to overcome maternal reluctance inspired by love. To her surprise, the announcement of her purpose was received with prompt favor, and a vehement opposition was raised in an unexpected quarter.

"Rose," said her mother, "I am glad you are going. You are the very one to go. I wish I could go too."

"Well," said Agate Bissell, with a look of unfeigned amazement, "I have heard a good deal about the singularities of the Wentworths, but this beats them all! I wonder what will come next!"

"Why Agate? What is there so remarkable or eccentric in a woman's going to hospitals to nurse wounded soldiers?"

"Of course women ought to go," said Agate. "But I don't think it the place for young and pretty girls! I guess you've little idea of what soldiers are, or what camp life is!"

"But somebody must go," said Rose, smiling at Agate's earnestness.

"To be sure there must. But homely folks aren't all dead yet, nor old folks, nor middle-aged folks. When all these are used up it will be time to try the young and handsome ones!"

"Really, Agate," said Rose, very much amused, "I never knew you so complimentary before. I think I shall have to go, even if I wear a veil to save the young soldiers' hearts while I dress their wounds. It would be sad indeed to make worse wounds than one cures!"

"Do you mean to say, Miss Rose, that you are going?—or only that you are thinking about it?"

"As sure as my life is spared, Agate, I shall go, and that before many days."

"Then, as sure as my life is spared, you won't go alone!"

"What, Agate," said Mrs. Wentworth, "you don't mean to go yourself?"

"I do mean to go myself! If Rose will venture on so rash a business, it's high time for somebody to go along and take care of her."

Without more ado, Agate turned and went to her room, selected the few things which she needed, finished all her packing within an hour, except a few articles yet to be made, and came down to see to the tea, as if she had merely been getting ready to go to the prayer meeting. She said nothing further on the subject of the conversation, except to Rose:

"I am all ready. You can start when you please."

It was Wednesday on which this scene occurred. The next Monday was fixed as the day for departure. Agate, though ready, night or day, to leave, was yet glad of the respite, chiefly because on the next afternoon she would have one more opportunity of attending the female prayer meeting.

Let us look in on the meeting.

In a small room, about three in the afternoon, were gathered nine women, every one of them mothers, except Agate Bissell.

Polly Marble was there, with her great spectacles mounted up on her withered face, as if the sun had used them as lenses and dried every particle of moisture out of the features behind them. One or two others were melancholy and silent women, plain farmers' or mechanics' wives, who had evidently struggled much with sorrow. Miss Pifkins was there—a sharp saint, who ferreted out people's sins with a zeal and assiduity which rendered her grace most savory. In action she was really kind. Her hand was bountiful. In sickness she knew no limit to service. No one in trouble had ever a better friend. It was her tongue that played the part of Law, while her heart acted the Gospel. Her prayers were often but salutary lectures. When any wickedness had disturbed the town she was apt to have great liberty in prayer at the next meeting. "There is no use in mincing matters. Sin is exceedingly sinful, and we may as well out with it, as to smother it all up with excuses and mercy and all that sort of thing."

Good Mrs. Taft was there, as sweet as twilight in June. So was Mrs. Goodhue, who never failed to go to sleep. She was round, rosy, good-natured. There was a smile spread out under her very skin, which nothing could rub out. Trouble had tried it, but failed. Stern religious views had tried it, but her round, rosy face smiled on. Age now was trying it; but though it could dry up the hair, change its color, convex the eye-ball and disturb its functions, it did not get on with the face. *That* shone and smiled at fifty very much as it did at twenty-five.

Mrs. Goodhue came unfailingly to prayer-meeting—I could never tell why; for, as soon as the preliminary talking was over and business began, she dropped asleep. She waked easily—waked to kneel down, and waked to rise up again. She was always asked to pray, and always said, in a sweet voice, "No, I thank you." So much for externals. There is another side.

A mother is praying. Before her is opened the other world and the listening Saviour. She is praying for children, meaning her own. Her heart is deep. Her love is the whole treasure of her life. She believes her children in danger of eternal ruin. She is imploring succor. Listen, as her voice, low and tremulous, rises with the intensity of feeling, and grows musical. Listen! as her emotions swell, how sentences dissolve in passionate feeling, tears fall, and sobs are uttered, and low sighs on every side attest the sympathy. Respect such a scene! Respect is a poor and barren word for such fervor of faith and fidelity of love.

And now Agate prays. She has imparted to her friends her impending journey and errand. Her heart is full. There is not a word for herself. She prays for the country, for the church and for the cause of God. She prays for the afflicted family in which she lives; for the one who is going to minister to the sick and dying; and all her petition is that Rose may be wise in directing dying sinners to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. As she proceeds, all formality of tone is gone. At last Agate is free, when she can, without let or hindrance, pour forth that silent soul in full utterance before God. Her words rise in power and dignity. She falls into the language of the Old Testament. She seems greater than woman—some prophetess returned to our days--with wealth of affection and chastened familiarity! She pours out her innermost feelings before her Redeemer; and so real is it, that, standing, as I do, and listening, I half expect to see the clouds part and the celestial vision appear. Ah! when women's hearts are unfolded in the presence of their God, he must be base-minded indeed who remembers their pinched faces, their angular forms, their ungraceful ways, while their kindled souls are giving utterance to the very passionateness of love and worship! Few places on earth are so near to heaven as where Christian wives and mothers pray for their families.

When Agate returned home there was nothing unusual in her look or manner. It was no unusual feeling that she had experienced. The hidden life was mightier and nobler in Agate than the revealed one. Her faith was not only a tabernacle of joy in times of sorrow, but a pavilion where she was hidden till the storm was overpast.

There were two surprises in reserve for Rose before she left. Alice Cathcart came on Saturday night, as she often did, to pass the Sabbath day in town, and on this night she was radiant with joy. Barton had been exchanged, and was now in Washington with his regiment. He expected, however, to be at home the next week to take the coloneley of one of the new regiments. Frank Esel was to be his lieutenant colonel!

"Then you have had letters?" said Rose.

"Yes. Do you know that, until he reached Washington, he knew nothing of Arthur's death? His letter is very full of Arthur. He loved him, he says, more than if he were a brother. How strange it seems, when you have had a great sorrow, and months have passed until you begin to grow used to it, to see it break upon some one, as this news did on Barton, as if it had just happened, and all the freshness and particularity of your sorrow comes back to you in an echo from another heart!"

While they thus sat in the open door, talking of the loved and absent, and both of them thinking, down deeply in the silence of the heart, of other things, which their lips would not reveal, a robin flew into one of the trees in the meadow, and began singing that plaintive call for its mate which one hears so often in summer. It is the robin's sweetest and most spirited song, and few strains there are that surpass it in tenderness, clearness and brilliancy. Rose had always associated this evening robin-song with the idea of a love-call to one absent. To-night it seemed more yearning and passionate than usual. She followed the bird with her eye. At first he sat patiently and sang. Then, as if surprised that no response followed, it gave new force to its call. Now, growing restless, it changed place, singing in turn from several trees, and jerking itself nervously, as if really alarmed at last lest it were forsaken. It seemed to Rose to say, "The night is coming on. Where is my love? Oh! is he harmed? Am I forsaken?" It grew dark rapidly; the song ceased; the bird flew silently away as if there was nothing left to sing for. There was silence in the air and among the trees. Rose too became silent and thoughtful. At length she said, abruptly:

"*Colonel* Cathcart! Who would have dreamed in the old happy days, when we were all children, and he was so shy and yet so bold, that we should grow to this?—he in the army, and I in the army hospitals! I did not see him, Alice, before he left. You will meet him next week, but I shall be in Washington. This is playing at cross-purposes."

Alice had something else to tell; but, as if there was a pleasure in keeping it back, she waited till the evening was spent, and they were preparing for sleep, when she said, looking at Rose earnestly, and yet mirthfully, with her great black eyes:

"Rose, won't you tell any body if I will tell you something?"

"Of course not, if it is a secret."

"Well, I too am going with you and Agate. Father has consented; mother always wanted me to go. But I am to wait till next Spring. Then, if the war is not over, father says I may go out in the service of the Sanitary Commission and join you. And Hiram Beers says he's too old to go a soldiering, but that if Agate can find out that he can do anything to help in the hospitals, he'll wind up this Winter and come out in the Spring with me."

Joined as their lives had ever been, it was a joy to Rose that they were to be inseparable still; and though some months were to elapse before Alice would come to her, yet by that time Rose would have become used to the work, and could smooth the way for Alice.

The seed sown by Florence Nightingale brought forth a plentiful harvest in America. Wherever hospitals were established were found women of energy and devotion who gave their time to ministrations of mercy. They came from every position in society; yet to the honor of true culture be it said, that women from circles of wealth and refinement led in this merciful crusade.

Mrs. Wentworth, with maternal anxiety, would have overloaded our pilgrims with preparatives. Agate Bissell, however, refused all help.

"Why, Mrs. Wentworth, we are not going where fine clothes will do us any good. Few things and strong, are all we want. When they are used up we'll send for more."

"She is right," said Dr. Wentworth. "A life among field hospitals is as near a total revolution of ordinary experience as can be conceived. It will be a spectacle of Christian refinement going down to the very border of savage life on an errand of love. Now, Rose, you are walking in His very footsteps, 'who, though rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich.' Great joy is before you if you go in that spirit. But it is a joy unknown to common life,—the very joy of self-sacrificing Benevolence.—But what *is* Agate building up with her needle, Rose?"

"Well, father, it may be called a Paradise of Pockets; otherwise, nursing aprons."

"You may laugh now," said Agate, very composedly, "but when we go into the field, and follow the march, with men every other step faint or wounded, you will find these aprons better than lugging a carpet-bag."

There were pockets on the sides and pockets on the front, pockets low down and pockets high up, pockets for thread and needles, pockets for buttons, tape, and small things, pockets for small rolls of bandages and lint—pockets for knives, scissors, and comb and brushes, a pocket for vials and one for a good brandy flask.

The cloak may be described as a congeries of small bags, so arranged that the wearer, if strong enough to stand up under the load, could carry in it a reasonable supply of comforts and restoratives for a small household.

Although the doctor made merry over Agate's contrivances, he admired her sagacity in foreseeing the nature of her work.

"It is not every one who has served in a campaign that is as well instructed as Agate seems to be before she has seen a single wounded man."

"Anybody that ever did any nursing," said Agate, "can imagine pretty much what they've got to do. In the hospitals I expect we shall have everything provided. But in the fields I guess we shall have to provide for ourselves—at any rate a good part of the time. It's better to have these things and not want them, than to want them when you get there and not have them."

Dr. Buell, on the last Sunday before the little party started, bore them in memory, and the fervor and tenderness with which he prayed for all who went forth to succor the needy, manifestly showed that his thoughts were with Agate and Rose. Indeed, though not his custom, he spent the Sabbath evening with the Wentworths. Although they were to leave on Monday, there was nothing to tempt Agate to the least work on Sunday. She was twice at church, and with her Sunday-school class as well prepared as if there had been no unusual outfit going on, and by ten o'clock on Saturday night the last stitch had been fastened, the last string tied, everything was packed and laid ready for early departure on Monday.

"Why, Agate," said Mrs. Wentworth, "you will work on Sundays, shall you not, when you are in the field?"

"Of course I shall. Works of necessity and of mercy are proper on Sunday. When folks live at home and have the whole week to themselves there need not be many such works left for Sunday—not if they have any conscience about it. But I think now-a-days folks make Sunday a kind of rubbish-day. They save up all the little odds and ends, through the week, that won't pay, and then on Sunday call 'em works of necessity and mercy. I call 'em works of laziness. Anybody that *wants* to keep Sunday to the Lord, will keep an eye to it all the week. My opinion is, that the reason why folks don't like Sunday is, that they don't know what it is to have a day full of real peace, up to the brim, from morning to night, and sweet as milk."

"She'll do," said Dr. Wentworth to his wife, in an undertone, and in an amused way. "Before Agate gets back she will have learned something about the world; but I'm mistaken if other people don't learn something about a real plain New England woman! It's a pity that some man had not the good sense to win so much sense and goodness."

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Wentworth, with a slight cast of her eye at the other side of the room, "some other people are of your mind."

"What?" said the doctor, "you don't mean——"

"*I* don't mean—but I think Dr. Buell does."

Why *will* people pry into other people's business? There sat Dr. Buell properly enough, neither saying soft things to Agate nor exchanging glances. All that he had ever done was to consult Agate, within the last six months, respecting the religious interests of the parish; and any minister might have done that with profit. Her judgment was worth any wise man's consideration. Dr. Buell was grateful for it, and expressed his sense of thanks by the cordiality with which he shook Agate's hand; and if it lingered in his, it was because the good man was growing absent-minded.

When Mrs. Wentworth had slyly hinted to Agate that Dr. Buell would lack for counsel when she was gone, Agate's manner showed that there was no foundation whatever for Mrs. Wentworth's sly humor. Her cheek flushed slightly, and her eye, with resentful good nature, flashed a little, but did not turn away; she looked the doctor's wife full in the face, while she said:

"I know what you mean. It's no such thing. The doctor has never said a word to me that any body might not hear, and he's no ideas about it anyhow."

"About what, Agate?" said Mrs. Wentworth, in the most innocent manner, "ideas about what?"

Agate walked out of the room with some emphasis in her movement; yet her principles enabled her to keep good-natured.

On Monday they left for Washington, to enter upon their new and strange duties.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

A NEW LIFE.

It was indeed a new life to Rose more than to Agate; for Rose's life had dealt less with business and more with sentiment, while Agate's had been trained to practical affairs. There was a hospital in Washington which had suffered from the incompetence both of nurses and surgeons. After a few weeks the medical director of the Department was glad to place Agate Bissell there as superintendent and matron, while Rose became her assistant.

Agate's entrance upon her duties was the signal of alarm among a multitude of unworthy attendants. It can be likened to nothing better than the entrance of a conscientious cat into a house where rats and mice have had unmolested liberty. There was racing and scampering, hiding and peeping out of holes, alarm and cunning; but, one by one, each culprit was surprised and dispatched, to the great comfort and stillness of the household.

Hospital stores were no longer squandered nor consumed by nurses and attendants. Wines and brandies now found their way oftener to the wounded than to those who waited on them. The special diet suddenly improved in quality, in regularity, and in a certain feminine neatness and refinement.

"I say, Jim, there's a new hand at the bellows in this shop—we never had things afore like this!"

"That's so; the old 'un is a cap'n. I tell ye she drills 'em, she does. When she fust came and I heerd her dressin' down some of the nusses, I thought we'd got a tartar. Lord bless her, though, when she comes to the sick 'uns—you'd think she's ten mothers rolled into one!"

"This is the first time," weakly sighed a mere skeleton of a man, on the next couch, "that any thing has tasted good since I got here."

Agate's zeal of neatness had the eagerness of the hunting instinct. She brought everything to order. She established a method for all things, and compelled its observance, or dismissed the refractory. She stood very little upon ceremony. She expressed her opinion upon persons just as unhesitatingly as upon things. Every day her heart yearned more and more for "her boys," as she called the patients. In a month's time a perfect revolution had taken place. The hospital, which was the very worst, had risen to become a model. She did not confine her labors to her subordinates. She had lived too long with Dr. Wentworth not to know what conscientious medical practice was. She rebuked the assistant surgeons when they neglected their proper duties, and became such a thorn in their sides that they determined to oust her. She helped on that purpose. One morning she found out that, though it was eleven o'clock, no special diet list had been made out for one of the wards, the assistant surgeon in charge having been on a "spree" the night before. He was sleeping off his drunkenness. When at length he came, Agate confronted him with an eye that did not seem pleasant for him to look upon. With a few cold but terrible sentences, she brought the blood to his cheeks.

"Well, well," said the surgeon, with ill concealed annoyance, "what's the matter now?"

"Matter enough, as you shall soon find out. All these sick men left without attention or food, that you may indulge a brutal appetite! And then do you dare, sir, attempt to face me down with your impudence? You'd better pull off those shoulder-straps and resign."

"This a great fuss over a little matter," said the surgeon, who was more alarmed than he was willing to show. "I know my own business, and I sha'n't tolerate your meddling."

"I know my business, too," replied Agate, fiercely, "and you shall find it out. I'll pull off that shoulder-strap before you're a week older."

When he was gone, some of the attendants were greatly alarmed, dreading his influence with his superiors.

"Oh, ma'am, he'll have it jest his own way. He'll get up a report, and them's above him will think it all right, and, first thing we know, you'll be sent off to some other work. I've seen how things go here."

"Don't you be troubled," said Agate, quietly, and went on with her work.

Sure enough, within a week came a new matron with an order superceding Agate Bissell. As the woman seemed to be both sensible and kindly, Agate said:

"I wish you would withhold this matter till after noon."

"Certainly, madam, if it will make a difference with you."

"It *may* make a good deal—with some other folks."

Agate immediately gave things in charge to Rose, put on her bonnet and shawl, and started for the White House. She had never been used to riding in hacks; and, although the distance was great and the walking very bad, she bravely sped her way to the President's mansion.

The waiting-man at the door looked at her very much as a dog looks at a stranger, to see whether it is worth his while to bark or not. The inspection, however, seemed favorable. He pointed to the stairs and said:

"Go up."

Not knowing whither, Agate obeyed and went up. Landing in a wide hall, a folding door stood open, in which she saw some fifteen or twenty people waiting. A door-keeper stood at the first door on the right as she entered, receiving cards, which he carried into the President's reception-room, and then, from time to time, as parties came out, he called to one and another to enter. Agate approached him and said:

"Is the President in?"

"Yes, ma'am. Let me have your card, if you please."

"Tell him that Agate Bissell wants to see him."

"Let me write your name. Perhaps you'll do it yourself, on this card!"

Within half an hour she was admitted. The room was large, and furnished scarcely better than a country lawyer's office. A large open fire-place was on the right side of the room as she entered. On the left hand wall hung many maps. One also there was over the mantel-piece, apparently just drawn in ink, and giving the country between the Potomac and Richmond. A large, long table covered with green baize stood in the middle of the room, and beyond it, near to the windows on the side opposite the door, was a smaller table at which sat a long, lean, grandfatherish man. He was running his left hand through stiff and long black hair, now beginning to be struck through with grey. His features were large, and seemed, like chance travellers at an inn, to have put up together for a night, rather than to have been a family of relations.

"Well, ma'm," said he, in a broad country accent, his voice somewhat drawling and shrill, "this is Agate Bissell, I 'spose. What can I do for you."

"You can do nothing for *me*," said Agate Bissell, firmly, but with great respect; for she had a profound New England reverence for a chief magistrate of the nation, queer as she thought the specimen now before her—"you can do nothing for me, but you can do a good deal for the soldiers."

"Well, what is it?"

Agate briefly narrated her experience, to which the President listened gravely, and she ended by saying:

"I wish, Mr. President, that you would ask the chief medical director here, to look into this matter with his own eyes, and not to take his opinion from drunken underlings, who, while soldiers shot down in battle are lingering and dying before him, is lying beastly drunk, and then would turn out of charge those who rebuke him. Oh Mr. President, how can anybody doubt the doctrine of total depravity when they see the wretches robbing wounded soldiers, eating the delicacies sent to them, and drinking their cordials, and letting their wounds stink and rot, from carelessness? Its enough to touch a stone's heart."

Mr. Lincoln's heart was no stone.

"Madam, I will give you a note to the Doctor, and do you go and talk to him jest as you have to me."

He sat down and took an unglazed visiting card, and wrote with a pencil:

"Dr. ———. Please hear this woman's statement, and make enquiry in person, and if it is true, put her back, and pray for twenty more such women. A. LINCOLN."

"There—do you go yourself. If anything turns up, and it don't go right, you come to me again. Let me see. Agate Bissell—Agate Bissell—yes, I'll remember your name and some time I'll come down and see how you're getting along."

Armed with this, Agate soon found the medical director. It required but little time to satisfy him. She was re-instated, the assistant surgeon was dismissed the service, and great fear fell upon all who had to do with Agate!

That evening Rose said—"What kind of a man did you find the President to be."

"A very good *man*, said Agate—but I didn't see much President about him. But I 'spose he had not got his official clothes on, and so he did not rumple up his feathers much."

While Agate played the General, Rose, in her own way, was quite as efficient. She had, what many noble fellows in this labor of love had not, ample command of money. She sought to cheer the sick and wounded by relieving the barren wards of their cold and forlorn appearance. She procured cheerful engravings, suited to the tastes of the men, and hung them where they could easily see them. She went daily to the green-houses for flowers, and distributed them through the wards. "It does not require masses of flowers," she would say. "A single bud with a leaf, by a cot, is often far more prized than a large bouquet would be." In this way, the convalescents had each some token, and many of the men begged leave to send home these offerings to their mothers or sisters.

Rose showed great skill in conversation with the men, and imparted to them much religious truth. He must have been a hardened man indeed who could not listen to her sweet voice reading in low tones by his bedside the psalms of David, or the Evangelists.

"Why, Tom," said a wounded man to an Irish soldier, who lay next him, "I thought you was a Catholic? How dare you let a heretic read the Bible to you?"

"She's no hiritic, I tell ye. D' ye think they make hiritics of such as thim? Ye couldn't keep her out of hiven, more'n you can keep the birds out of the gardens. If you druv 'em away iver so many times, they'll fly back agin, sure!"

The experience gained in Washington was such that, when in the spring and summer of 1862, McClellan made his ill-fated campaign of the Peninsula, Agate, Rose, and Alice, who had joined them, followed the army and served in the brigade and regimental hospitals. During battles, they hovered upon the edge of the conflict, preparing food for the wounded, aiding in binding up their wounds, furnishing them with stimulants, and comforting the dying. Now it was that Rose found her whole soul drawn forth. Every power was taxed. She rose to the necessities of the hour in a manner which made her the admiration of all. Perhaps she could not surpass Agate in the methodical administration of business, in the routine of wards in hospital, although she equalled her and grew every day in strength and endurance. But she surpassed Agate in *medical sense*. She had evidently inherited her father's medical tact and insight; and, though she avoided taking the surgeon's work out of their hands, her quickness and aptitude were of continual service even to medical men.

But far more than these things was Rose noticed for her courage and her power of inspiring men with hope, and cheer, and courage. Her resources of thought, her wealth of feeling, her great power of expression, her imagination and humor seemed endless. Indeed Alice wrote truly when she said to her parents that Rose had broken forth into a new life. All those resources which lay untaxed in her former quiet life were now developed into an even and steady enthusiasm. Her pity and tenderness made her presence to the sick and wounded like a light shining upon them from their own home. In different places, she earned for herself among the soldiers pet names. They played upon her name and styled her the "Ever-blooming Rose." And when she brought coffee, or fragrant tea, made as no one else knew how to suit it to their taste, they naturally called her the "Tea-Rose." In other camps she was known as the "Norwood Beauty,"—and she *was* beautiful! The constant play of courage, pity, benevolence, and the enthusiasm of patriotism had given to her face a radiant outlook peculiarly charming.

She accompanied the troops and returned with them from the Peninsula. She returned to Washington to care for the multitudes of wounded that came in from Pope's disastrous campaign. She went with the wagons of the Commission to Antietam, and hovered along that field wherever were wounded and suffering. It was here that she was inspired by danger and desperate necessity to take the surgeon's knife.

In a small house, so near to the battle that shot were flying around it in every direction, were collected multitudes of the wounded. The surgeon was in the act of amputating a shattered leg. Rose stood near, his only assistant. The saw had half-severed the bone, when a cannon-shot struck him dead. The patient was left bleeding. Seized with an inspiration, Rose, without an instant's hesitation, put her hand to the saw, completed the severing, tied the arteries, joined the flaps, and bound up the wound. The man recovered. She had often been called the "Surgeon's Daughter;" but now the men changed it, and called her the "Daughter-surgeon."

Alice was never separated from Rose. They worked together, rode and travelled together, slept together. Scarcely less than Rose was Alice admired and beloved by the common soldiers. She often sang to them in the hospitals, wrote their letters home, received dying messages and faithfully transmitted them to friends at home.

The heroism of the war received its highest illustration in that band of noble women who followed the flag through darkness and blood, toiling as no soldiers on the march toiled, enduring hardships which none surpassed, facing all the dangers of the battle-field and many others in hospitals even more perilous than bullet or shell, and in many instances offering their lives as a sacrifice to humanity and religion! The evangelists of a true gospel were they, sowing the good seeds of peace in the furrows of war!

Alice Cathcart was not less patriotic in her feelings than Rose. But for some reason, she added to these generous impulses a peculiar pity and tenderness toward the sick and wounded rebel prisoners. This disposition drew forth from Hiram Beers many criticisms and discussions.

"I think you might use your time better'n to be curin' up the fellows that fought us, so's to fight agin."

"Why, Hiram," said Alice, imploringly, "they are not our enemies now that they are sick and helpless. The poor and sick the world over should be like their own children to the well and the merciful."

"You may have 'em, if you want. But you won't catch me adoptin' sech a scaly set o' children. I'll tell ye, you're fatteain' 'em up agin to shoot down our boys. It's like geese and chickens goin' round to cure up all the sick foxes."

"Would you let them suffer, Hiram? would you see them die without a crumb from our stores?" said Alice, in a plaintive way.

"Wal, mebbe I'd give 'em the crumbs, but I wouldn't give 'em a slice round the whole loaf. The fact is, you give 'em cakes and gingerbread, and that's running kindness into the ground, I'm thinkin'," said Hiram.

Agate Bissell came to the rescue.

"Hiram Beers, you old hypocrite, what do you want to teaze that child for? You know you don't believe a word you're saying. I should like to know who 'twas that ran about last week for clothes and stockings for the shivering prisoners; and who 'twas that looked after those two boys in ward ten, when we were in the hospital? You know you're just plaguing Alice. Alice, don't mind a word he says. His tongue is of no more account than the shaking of the leaves on the trees."

It fell out that after the battle of Antietam there fell to Alice's care, among others, a young rebel officer, evidently a person of refinement and position. He entered into no conversation. His wounds were severe, and probably fatal. For several days he maintained a proud and almost defiant reserve. His face wore the expression of suffering, though he carefully avoided all tokens of pain.

He seemed reluctant to get well at the hands of Northerners. Alice hovered about him as if there was some fascination which wrought upon her. Nor was her labor of love unregarded. Little by little the young officer showed a pleasure in her presence, and a docility which he manifested to no one else. That pride and repugnance which sickness and suffering could not break, began sensibly to yield to kindness.

As he grew weaker, his large eyes, set in an emaciated face-frame, followed Alice as she came or left, as a child's eyes follow a mother. As he declined, Alice, as often as she could snatch time, read to him the Word of God, or sang hymns in a low, sweet voice.

"I know not what it is," said she to Rose, "but I seem to have met this gentleman before. Of course I do not suppose that I have; but there is something in his voice at times that startles me. I can hardly help saying, 'Where *have* we met before?' Last evening, when I sung to him, a tear ran down his cheek and he said, 'That's my brother's favorite hymn.' He turned his face to me and said:

"'Will you be kind enough to tell me your name?'

"I repeated that it was Alice Cathcart, of Norwood, in Massachusetts."

"He seemed agitated, and looked intently at me, and repeated it several times—'Ah! Alice—Cathcart.' Then, pausing as if his mind ran back over some memory, he said, musingly,—'Alice Cathcart! That is very singular, that both of us should have fallen under your care.'

"'Both of us?' I asked, inquiringly. 'Have I ever met you before?'

"I was just then called away. But to-morrow, if he seems disposed to conversation, I mean to find out more about him."

Very early in the morning, before the sun was up—before it was fairly light—Alice was summoned to her patient. Mid-September fogs clouded the air and drenched the grass and leaves with wet. She felt a chill shivering as she hasted to meet the call. He was fast sinking. It was evident that death was upon him. He revived a little. Looking upon her, he said:

"Alice, don't leave me. I have much to say."

Then, his voice sinking to an inaudible whisper, his lips moved for a minute or more. A little stimulant was given him, and for a second he revived, as a fire on which a handful of shavings is thrown.

"Tell my mother, Alice"—and his voice died away, though still his lips moved.

Once or twice Alice could distinguish names, but all the rest was undistinguishable. He lay for a few moments in perfect stillness. Suddenly the light came to his eyes, and he looked around eagerly as if following a vision. It was but a flash. The flame went out and all was still.

Alice, although familiar with every form of suffering, was so much affected by the death of the young rebel officer that Agate Bissell insisted upon her retiring.

Agate herself gave orders for his burial. His few effects were gathered up. His watch and a pocket-book were the only valuables. On examining them, there was found several letters from his home—one from his brother, a colonel in the rebel army—and his own name,

HENRY C. HEYWOOD,
Lynchburgh, Va.

Agate called Rose to her.

"This young man is your friend Tom Heywood's brother—the brother *Hal* he used to mention so often."

Rose was scarcely less affected than Alice had been. For a moment she was overcome; but, quickly recovering herself, she enjoined upon Agate the most profound secresy.

"For reasons which I cannot tell, you must not mention this name to Alice. It will do no good, and will do much harm."

Agate's sharp sagacity needed no further help. She had her own thoughts, but was satisfied to leave Rose to manage the matter as it pleased her.

At the evening twilight young Heywood was quietly buried, and the place marked securely. As soon as the opportunity could be found his few effects were sent to his friends and with them a note to his mother.

"MY DEAR MADAM.—After your son was wounded and captured on the second day of the battle of Antietam, he came to the hospital of which I have charge. Every attention was paid to him. A faithful friend ministered to his religious wants with the fidelity and tenderness of a sister. His last thoughts rested upon his home. He called by name his various relatives, and would have sent messages, had not his death been more sudden than he anticipated. I pray you to allow me, as a friend of Mr. Thomas Heywood, to express my deep sympathy with you. ROSE WENTWORTH.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE DIARY OF A WEEK.

Monday.—It will never do. I must not stay here, wasting my life in a dream. I must be a man, and leave Rushton and Lillie Fairleigh. Good Heavens! why do I stay here, knowing as I know that Colonel Hunter is to marry her, and that if he were not, I should be the very last to woo and win her. She so rich a woman—the beauty and boast of Rushton—and I——

Well, no, I'll never cry myself down. That might be as bad as boasting—who knows? I'm a tall, strong fellow, not ignorant, and likely to earn my bread. But the men who are Miss Fairleigh's friends are different men from me—elegant, accomplished; rich most of them, at least they have time to ride with her through the sweet green lanes, or to turn her music and sing duettes with her, or play croquet upon the lawn, while I am toiling in the corn-field or amongst the hay. Truly, she bows and smiles when we meet; but so she does to every one. No pride about her. I should not like her so well if there were; only that lily of a thing with her elegant breeding is not made for a farmer's wife. Why could not I have taken a liking to Ann Hazle, with her bright eyes and notable ways—Ann Hazle, who perhaps might be brought to like me. Psha! this is only a diary, not a letter. Let me say what I mean;—who would be perfectly willing to accept me. I don't know why, but I never could love Ann Hazle. I do love Miss Fairleigh, and so I am going away before the bells ring on her wedding-day.

It is a pretty custom, that—I am glad they hold to it in Rushton; a pretty, pretty custom. How fair she will be in her bridal robes! and Colonel Hunter will mate her well; only I cannot stay to see. I will think it over—how to go and where.

How well it comes back to me!—the day we first met. The old folks were living then, and mother took her to board for the summer. She had not come into her fortune yet, and was only seventeen. What a shy, sweet, beautiful thing, and how simple. She loved the orchard, and the old spring, and the bit of woods, and the pretty trout stream, like a country girl. And she rode old Dobbin, and helped us toss hay, and learnt to milk Mooley.

Yet, withal, she seemed so far away from me that she might have been born in the stars. I asked mother what it was that made her seem so, for I could say anything to mother. She answered:

"It's only that she is so genteel."

Genteel; the squire's daughter is that, and even Annie Hazle. Mother did not understand—not even mother. A year ago she came back to be mistress of her fine house. Twenty-one now—a woman, not a girl. She is statelier than ever; more like a lily, too, but just as kind; only it could never be as it was in the farm-house that summer. And yet I think they are right when they say she will accept Colonel Hunter.

I must go. Yes, I must leave Rushton.

Tuesday.—I have slept on it. It is plainer now. It is death to stay. I lose strength of heart and body. I know now what mad dreams I had before Colonel Hunter came. I thought she liked me; that her eye rested kindly on me; that I was not a mere, digging, delving clown to her. I used to fill the rooms with the faces of children who called her mother, in my dreams. Idiot! wealth and high breeding must draw a line even in America. Since then I have seen the man nature meant for her. His hands are as soft as hers. He is as elegant—as rich. Heaven bless them both. But I must go.

It will be hard, too, to sell the place, I love it so—the great green fields, the good old house where my parents lived so long.

The very furniture seems to have life,—the rocking chair, the great book-case, the long dining table, the settle with its green cushion, the maps upon the wall. And Dinah,—she'll fret; and I shall miss her. A good black servant may be a friend. She shall have the little house at the end of the farm, with its triangular bit of ground, for her own, and with that her savings will keep her comfortable. Who will buy the old farm, I wonder, and will they love the old things? and shall I come back some day, a worn out old man, to take a last look at it before I die? But I am unmanly. I go of my own choice, and need not blubber over it.

Wednesday.—Mr. Whittemore is going to buy the place. His daughter Jane is to be married, and he will make it a wedding gift for her. "My children shall not long for my old shoes," he said. "I'll give them all I can while I live. I did think of the Wells farm, but since yours is for sale, I like it better." The thing is as good as done. Jane will sit in the chair my mother rocked me in to lull her babes to sleep. She will patter about the great kitchen in her busy way. It will be hers—theirs—not mine any longer, except in memory. Well, better so. If they who reared me here know why I go, they will bless me in the going. Here I could not be a man. I must cure myself of the foolish heart-ache. Jane would be glad of Dinah's help, if she will stay; and if she chooses it to be so, still the house and bit of ground may be hers—a refuge in her old age. I did not know the old creature loved me so. I told her to-day what I meant to do, and she frightened me. It seemed to break her heart to think of my leaving her. To-morrow I shall give myself one indulgence. I shall call on Miss Fairleigh and bid her good-by. For the last time. Were I to stay here, I would never meet her but only once for all my future life—only once again I must speak to her and touch her hand.

Thursday.—What a coward I am! To-day, I took a bunch of roses and golden violets to the Hall—Miss Fairleigh. I found her alone, and she talked to me so pleasantly that the old times returned as though they had never passed away. I gave her the violets and roses, and left her after I had stayed as long as I dared. But how strangely I forgot the purpose of my visit! I never even remembered I was to leave the farm, so I did not say good-bye. I must go again for that. But I have been happier ever since. How sweet her voice is! How dark her eyes! How I love her—oh, how I love her! She wore a new ring upon her finger—was it Colonel Hunter's? Perhaps so. I must go. How could I forget for a moment that I must go?

Friday.—Mr. Whittemore has been to me. He is anxious for the farm. I have promised to sign the papers on Saturday evening. He says that Jane will take good care of poor mother's portrait and the framed piece of embroidery which she did at school, and that any little thing I want kept until I have a home of my own and am married she will keep safely. *I* married? But it was as well to say nothing and to try to smile. Monday I leave for town. I think I shall take to the sea. Sunday will not do for visiting. To-morrow I will actually bid good-bye to Lillie Fairleigh. Let me write the name outright. She is Lillie Fairleigh to my heart—my Lillie, though I may never call her so. Oh, if I might only kiss her good-by! But she will give me her hand—she did yesterday. And she will take my flowers again. I will go.

Sunday—evening.—I have missed a day. Yesterday I could not write. I was like one in a delirium. So much happened; such strange things. No, even now I dare not believe it. I took my flowers to Miss Fairleigh and nerved myself.

"They are the last I shall have the pleasure of bringing you," I said. "I have come to say good-by."

"Then it is true that you have sold the farm?" she asked.

"Quite true that I am about to sell it," I said.

She said nothing. She looked down at the flowers, and her face seemed pale to me, but so beautiful.

"I shall never return, I think," I said. "So it is a long good-by that I have come to say."

I held out my hand. She put hers into it.

"Oh, heavens! this is harder to bear than I thought it would be," I said, and broke down and could say no more.

Then I felt her little hand on my shoulder.

"Mathew," she whispered—(yes, she called me Mathew)—"why are you going to leave Rushton?"

"Because I love you," I had said, before I knew that I should say it.

And the hand did not leave my shoulder.

"Were that so you would stay," she said.

"To see you marry Colonel Hunter?" I asked.

But she answered:

"I shall never marry Colonel Hunter. It was never thought of. I am betrothed to no one."

And I looked up and met her eyes, and there was hope for me in them, and I told her all. Oh, the sweet, sweet ending. She loved me.

The farm will not be sold. Mr. Whittemore will buy the Wells place for his Jane. We are to live at the old homestead. Yes, there, for she so wills it. She also loves the old place. My dreams will come to me. I shall see her seated at my fireside. I shall call her wife, and her children will call me father. Is there anything more left on earth to wish for? Sunday bells—I hear them ringing. I must go to church to-day of all days, for I am very thankful to heaven. Sweet bells—holy bells. One day you will ring my wedding morning in,—my happy wedding morning.

I shall write no more in my diary. The sweet story is at its sweetest. I will close it here—the week-long diary of Mathew Hanon.

* * *

VIRTUE.—Virtue does not attract imitation, unless the person who gives the pattern be beloved as well as esteemed.

THE WEDDING-RING.

BY N. G. SHEPHERD.

See, love, this shining ring I hold,
  In which our fortunes blend,
Within its narrow round of gold
  Has nowhere any end.
In mute surprise, with half a smile
  You turn your eyes on me;
I answer, like the ring in this
  May our affection be.

And pure each wish and every joy
  Our married life may bring,
With little in them of alloy
  As this bright shining ring;
And as the metal it contains
  Is deemed of all the best,
So should the love of wedded souls
  In worth transcend the rest.

And it should so engross each heart,
  So closely fill each breast,
As not to leave the smallest part
  For any other guest;
And thus resemble once again
  This sacred pledge I hold,
Our wedding-ring, whose shining round
  Is of the thickest gold.

And as from heat gold's weight and worth
  Can never suffer loss,
But from the crucible comes forth
  Divested of all dross;
So may our love through life-long years
  Each ordeal endure,
And by affliction's touch be made
  More beautiful and pure.

This simple ring nowhere, you see,
  With art's device is wrought;
Thus should our bridal vows be free
  From every worldly thought;
And though embedded deep in mire
  No rust to it will cling;
So should our love shine always bright
  As this our wedding-ring.

And were it by some cunning hand
  To thinnest dust unrolled,
A goodly acre of broad land
  'Twould cover o'er with gold;
And so, like Zion's fruitful sons,
  Should we God's law obey—
Nay, let not those long lashes droop,
  Nor turn your head away.

◆

THE SPIRITUAL CIRCLE.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

"All things come round to him who will but wait."

Eve Ellis had one special and intense desire. There was nothing unnatural in this desire, or unusual in the fact, or the nature of it. A person must be characterless, indeed, who has no desires, no wishes for things attainable or unattainable.

Eve was not one of those negative characters who scarcely desire to change the current of life or fate, certainly make no efforts to that end. She was eager, impulsive, energetic. Her efforts were such as accorded with the intensity and power of her nature, though some persons may have thought them altogether disproportionable to the object so strongly desired. The game was not worth the candle, in the estimation of these people, the purpose not worth the vital energy wasted upon it.

But it is time the purpose were mentioned, and thus everybody enabled to exercise his own judgment and form his own opinion upon this point. Eve Ellis wanted a husband, desired to marry.

Eve's parents had died, both of them when she was a child. Her silent, sad mother had melted out of sight, like a white snow wreath before her mind had been able to receive the fleeting impression of that mother's individuality. Her gay, fashionable, somewhat dissipated father, had (fortunately we may perhaps be permitted to say) followed before he had time to scatter the inheritance of his child. She had grown to womanhood under the guardianship of her late father's man of business and lawyer, and with the prospect of plenty of money when she came of age, which period of fruition had been attained about three years previous to the opening of our sketch. A handsome suite of apartments had been secured for her, when she left school, in the home of a highly respectable family. This had been the work of her guardian. She had never enjoyed the sympathy of persons of congenial tastes, habits, and modes of thought, therefore she only vaguely missed it in this cold, stately home, where she was as much alone, as totally isolated, as if no other human beings resided beneath the same roof.

But as she grew older, and when at the age of twenty-one her guardian's legal duties ended, her wants and wishes began to take form. She wanted a home, a real home, not the cold shelter of an alien roof. She wanted that something which should represent love, sympathy, care, and protection.

Eve was no mere romantic, sentimental girl. She was twenty-three years old. Her nature was high and pure. No unworthy thought had ever crossed the clearness of her unstained soul.

She walked "in maiden meditation fancy free," so far as any individual was concerned. No one suspected the desire at which I have hinted. There was no one to warn her, no one to direct. The danger was unknown, unguessed at, by her, and hence she pursued her purpose energetically with the unshaken calmness which consciousness of the perfect purity of her motives imparted.

Eve went a good deal into society under the chaperonship of the wife of her former guardian, now her lawyer and man of business. Of course she met many people, and made many acquaintances. But she had no intimates of either sex, and eschewed confidences and flirtations. Even Mrs. Lewes, though always accompanying her, saw no evidences of her desire, and, in common with the rest of the world, called her cold, and set her down as a predestined "old maid." This lady sometimes, indeed, found the calm quietude of Miss Ellis rather disheartening, and would have liked better a livelier and more fascinating youthful companion. Elderly ladies often rather prefer to shine in the reflected light of the brilliant young ladies under their charge, than to be abandoned to the total neglect which is so frequently the fate accorded to their passée charms.

And yet it has been intimated that Eve Ellis pursued her object with energy.

Had she been of the spiritual mould of ordinary girls she would have ere this been stigmatised as a husband hunter through making her desires too evident. As she was constituted, not even her large, untrammeled fortune—her own *in esse*—attracted the usual crowd of fortune hunters. Suitors she had, undoubtedly. She was pretty enough to ensure this even without the fortune, and that was not without the potency of the usual charm of such belongings. But her quiet reserve, her utter want of the triumphant exultation with which the ordinary girl receives such manifestations, and ascribes them all to her personal deserts of beauty or brilliancy, soon cleared the circle, and let in the unobstructed free air upon her surroundings.

She was in a sense inexperienced; she longed for love and sympathy, and she adored goodness. Something, inherent or gained, unvailed shams, detected insincerities, before her. This extra sense, this abnormal detector, was her shield, and gradually the men who loved her fortune only, or coveted her calm pensive beauty, retired abashed before the simple questioning of her glance, or the quiet reserve of her high-bred manner

And yet she was energetic in the pursuance of her plan. To be sure it was but vaguely pursued, for the efforts were like itself badly organized, unsystematic. At the time of which I write a new element had been introduced into it, one, though she did not suspect it, involved discord.

Miss Ellis went out, and received visits of which Mrs. Lewes had no suspicion. Her motive in this concealment had no wrong. She had been invited, at first, in an unexpected manner, to attend a spiritual *séance*, and went, all unbelieving, into the midst of the charmed circle. If there was deceit, she failed to detect it. There was a seeming simplicity and honest seeking for truth that disarmed her suspicions, if she had ever entertained any. She was fascinated by the silent, grave charm of the circle. She had lived so apart from the ties of worldly kindred that it seemed not unnatural that she should seek counsel and help from the mother no longer unreal or an indistinct memory, now she was brought into what seemed direct and loving communication with her.

This had now continued some time. Her visits to the circle were constant. Here she found sympathy in her present pursuits, whatever they might be, for no one sought a solution of any mystery they might contain, or attempted to penetrate her secret. Human sympathy, in her unknown desires, was very precious to the lonely girl. The spiritual sympathy, the tender interest, she believed was felt in her by unseen friends, was beyond belief soothing.

Her communications came chiefly from her mother, and at length were received with explicit trust. They began to control her actions and shape her life, until at last the nature of their influence could no longer be concealed, and even its extent was guessed at, if not completely understood.

She no longer felt pleasure in society, and its claims were disregarded. And then the secret of her infatuation, once fathomed by a curious acquaintance, became public property. There were those who dared to use this discovery to forward their own unworthy ends.

Hitherto the influence of her new belief had been soothing and full of comfort. She was no longer lonely, since beings freed from every earthly dross, and removed to a higher sphere of existence, kindly and lovingly came to her in the still night hours, in the silence of that blessed magnetism of the circle, and even amid all the vexing turmoil of outer life, walking beside her unseen but not unfelt, and making her lonely life bright, with an effulgence of peace and joy, from out the serene beatitudes of their own holy and happy existence. The long haunting desire for earthly love, the joys of home, and the peace that a life filled with sweetest human fruitions offers, faded from her thoughts. With the blessed attendance, the safe guidance, the sweet care and protection of her spirit friends, she needed no more. She had just settled into the quiet happiness of her belief and enjoyment of all this, when the nature of the communications almost daily received from her mother changed.

Hitherto they had expatiated on the calm delights of a single life, and the exceeding luxury of doing good unrestrained by any interference.

"My daughter," these communications had often said, "You have chosen the better part. You have youth, health, a large and increasing income; find in these the sources of purest earthly enjoyment. No carking cares, no selfish demands, no assumed and intruding rights, no narrowing dictation and restraint, hinders you from the full enjoyment and benefit of the career of usefulness. You will be able to lend a large and noble aid to the despised and persecuted followers of our creed. To no object so good, so beneficently useful, can your wealth be devoted. To the disciples of this creed, to struggling women and men who brave the enemies of truth by their pure efforts for its spread, be ever the true and helpful friend. Your mother will thank and bless you."

Time after time had such words as these formed the staple of the communication. They were the sentiments of the medium as well as of the unseen friend whose ideas she often declared it was her blessed task to disseminate. That she accomplished this while fed, and clothed, and sheltered by the gifts of Eve, perhaps afforded no clue to the translation of the occult sentences she uttered.

And now, as I have said, the nature of these communications changed. Loudly and enthusiastically they reiterated the praise of a married life, and advised, and almost besought, Eve to unite her fate with that of some problematic individual, whose face and form and noble character should make a willing captive of her imagination and heart.

Of course this change was gradual. Even the spirits are unable to entirely abolish the human appreciation of consistency, though it is considered needless for them to be confined to the strict rules and precedents of their mortal life, while their listening followers scarcely expect from them a close adherence to human maxims and modes of belief.

Eve had no longer any doubts. How could she doubt the mother whose love had so long survived the grave, and now made her so happy? And now, with brief wonder at her change of sentiment, she resolved to follow the advice which chimed so perfectly with her suspended but unforgotten desire.

Not long before this period a neophyte of their faith had joined the circle where she had learned to appreciate the blessedness of spirit guidance. She had once or twice met him in the society she formerly frequented, but she had small acquaintance with him, and no prepossession in his favor. Now he was changed. He appeared among them, a humble learner, but fully convinced of the truths of his newly-adopted creed. At first, he approached her seldom, then oftener, as some new and astounding demonstrations furnished topics for animated conversation, till, at last, she learned to regard him as a friend, and to long to soothe the evident and painful sadness that hung over him.

It is not difficult to trace the birth of the pure, new passion that animated her. He was not well regarded in the world. She would always have shunned him there. Here he appeared in a new and more winning aspect, and she first pitied, then admired.

By and by the medium began to find and teach a new application of the communications daily proclaimed for Eve's benefit. "Her mother was evidently anxious now that she should marry. Had she observed when the first communication to that effect reached her? Did she connect it with no person or event? Her mother's spiritual intuitions were clearer. For her own (the medium's) part, she could not refrain from connecting it with—— No; Eve's own heart must tell her who. Would she obey this leading indication?

So, day by day, the lesson fell upon Eve's ear. Delicate, apparently timid, and often involuntary attentions, strengthened the impression, till at last Eve believed she loved; and with that strange infatuation of self-sacrifice to which so many, often the noblest, women abandon themselves, Eve allowed herself to listen, assent, and fall a victim.

She had not become engaged to Willis. The question of marriage had been resolved upon; but the words which were to make the matter final had not been spoken, when two or three of those events which we are so prone to call *accidents* almost simultaneously occurred to set her free.

She was at the circle. A communication from her mother had warned her that soon the proper time for her final decision to be made known would be indicated. As she leaned back in her chair, flitting hopes and fears passed across her mind, and a feeling of vague dissatisfaction with the fate which the spirits seemed to indicate for her, gained strength as she mused. The medium's hand was in her lap in Eve's sight. Suddenly another hand was protruded and carefully moved. It was a man's hand, and by its peculiar ring she recognized it as that of Willis. It dropped a note into the medium's, which that lady dextrously unfolded. Some folded bank notes were extracted, and almost immediately it was announced that some spirit had delivered a note to the medium, and it was triumphantly produced. It purported to be from Eve's mother, and fixed upon the following day for the important decision in Willis's favor. His eyes gleamed with exultation. Eve's were downcast and her cheek pale, but she was silent. She could not, all at once comprehend the enormity of the apparent deception. Willis accompanied her home, and found her strangely silent. She would only promise him his answer on the following day.

Late that night she still sat at her window, broad awake. Some young men passing, in low tones, spoke of the house as her residence.

"Eve Ellis, the heiress?" inquired one, evidently a stranger.

"Eve Ellis now," was the laughing reply.

"Eve something else soon," another replied.

"No doubt of that, for Willis always succeeds in his undertakings. He has not joined the N. street spiritual circle and got the medium under his thumb for nothing."

Another laugh arose from the group, and they passed on jovially.

With a sudden wrench, Eve's eyes were opened fully. "Stupid! stupid!" she cried. She recognized her position then, and knew how she had been deceived. And in that hour the lying spirits were cast out, and with them went the false love forever.

Next day Willis learned that the glamour had passed away, and that Eve was free. A few words announced this fact. With all her accustomed energy she reformed her ways. She visited the circle no more. She found life flat and aimless at first. All the excitement and sparkle was gone; but the crisis passed, and a wholesome quiet soon came. Eve was "clothed and in her right mind." She found legitimate and saving duties. After a time love came, naturally and gravely, to complete her life and furnish it new aims and occupations. She was happy and content. No spirit direction was needed, for her fate arranged itself according to its own demands. All her old restlessness passed away, and she only smiles now at the memory of the follies of the past, which held in itself such burden of coming joy and sorrow.

◆

UNDER THE BRIDGE.

THE NURSE-MAID'S STORY.

I don't believe in ghosts—oh, no, sir. Our pastor tells me—our good old pastor, with his snow-white hair and great white forehead—how that there are no such things, for God would not or does not allow it; and surely he knows better than me, who have never been anything but a poor nurse-maid. But for all that, what I tell you, happened. I wouldn't tell a lie. Good gracious me! where would be the use of it, even if I didn't know my ten commandments better. But I'm sure it wasn't a ghost, only maybe a sort of a vision, which I take to be, if you please, a dream dreamt while you're wide awake; though I wouldn't make so bold as to say so for sure, seeing I was always foot of my class in definitions when I was sent to school. I had a year's schooling, and I shudder all over when I think of the multiplication table and the keepings in and the standings onto benches, and the rattan.

Wasn't I glad, though, when aunt came to me as fast as she could one day, for it was a hot morning and she was fat—cook she was at Mrs. Grenoble's—and says to me, says she, "Here now, here's a chance for you. Missus she wants a nuss-maid, a young gal that has no bad habits nor vulgar ways o' talkin', and is neat and clean, and it's an easy place, for it's only for Master Charlie, just four to-day, and she's the sweetest lady ever lived and breathed the breath of life. It's a place for you, you won't get agin, Betty Baker," says she, sitting down and wiping her face, for she was broiling.

"Well," says I, "thank you, aunt, and thank you kindly, but would I suit? Maybe I have bad habits, and perhaps my way of talking *is* vulgar. I know I'm not genteel."

Says she—"You've allers took natral to speaking lady-like, though where you come by it goodness knows. *I* think it's the schoolin'—and that's my only trouble, Betty, takin' you from your larnin'."

When she spoke of school I felt decided. If once I went to service I'd done with that forever. Up I jumps.

"I'll go and try, aunt," says I; "I can but be refused."

"Put on your best things," says she, "and come along."

So I did, and, to cut a long story short, the lady hired me. I never was so pleased in my life, and that afternoon I went to bid good-by to the school-mistress.

"Going to leave, Betty Baker?" she said.

"Yes, Miss," said I; "I've got a place."

"Ah," said she, "it's a pity, Betty. You'd have made great improvement soon, I think. You were much better in your tables. You knew tentimes and apothecary's weight without a mistake last Wednesday."

"Yes, Miss," said I, not daring to tell how Lucy Peters prompted me. "But I must earn my way soon anyhow, and this is a good place."

"Yes," she said; "it's a pity though. Well, read all you can and try to remember all I've told you. You've been a very good girl, Betty."

And she gave me her cheek to kiss. I liked her better then than I ever liked her before. You see she'd never been so kind, and I really left the old school crying—the school I'd hated so.

However, I did not cry long, and I was very happy at Mrs. Grenoble's, with aunt in the kitchen to save nice bits for me, and always see that my tea was hot.

Mrs. Grenoble was a pretty young lady, with long fair curls and great blue eyes, and Mr. Grenoble, a stout gentleman with black whiskers, a deal older than his wife; and Charlie was just like his mother, only with his father's black eyes. People used to stop in the street to speak to him, he was so beautiful and so peculiar, with his pale yellow hair and fair skin and black eyes—*so* black. I loved him dearly, and, Heaven knows, I watched him as I would a child of my own, if I had ever had one. He was fond of me, too. Betty could quiet him, or get him to take a nap, or be dressed, when no one else could. And Mr. Grenoble, the very first Christmas I was there, gave me a garnet merino for being so good to the child. I tell that not to boast, for anyone would have been good to him, but to make myself feel easier about what I must tell.

I had been there nearly a year, when we all went together to the country—a nice, quiet place, a good way up in New York, and near the Hudson river. Indeed Mrs. Grenoble liked it, because it had such a pretty view of the water from the parlor windows. There was another child by that time, and neither the mother nor the baby were very strong, and the doctor had ordered them out of town.

How Master Charlie liked the trees and the water, I never shall forget that, let me live ever so long. "Pretty river," he used to call it, and in the night he'd wake me up, calling softly, with a pat of his fat hand:

"Betty, Betty, take Charlie to the pretty river in the morning time?"

That was the first thing always, to give him his little bath. Mrs. Grenoble and I used to go together, when she was well enough. At other times I went alone.

So, one day, she feeling faint and ill, as she often did, poor lady, I took little Charlie, and we went out for his bath. I had all his clean little things—snow-white every one of them—in a basket on my arm; and we were going along the road, when I saw some boys throwing stones at a poor bird, which was, as I saw, hovering about her nest in a dreadful fright for fear they should find it. So my heart bled for the poor thing, and I put down the basket, and told Charlie to hold it tight, and went over to them.

"Young gentlemen," said I, "if you please, don't hurt the bird. It's a wicked thing to do."

They were saucy boys. 'Squire Oaks' two was proud of being rich and great, as their father was.

"Who are *you*, to talk to us?" said one. "Don't mind a servant-girl, Bill!"

And the other threw a stone. I'm not sure whether it was at the bird or at me. But it hit my head. I just felt it strike, and down I dropped, and I must have lost my senses; for, when I opened my eyes, there I lay in the middle of a long green field, with the bird singing on the branches over head, and no one near me. I was faint and weak, but the minute I could struggle to my feet, I did, and got somehow to where I had left Charlie. The basket was there and a piece of cake he had been eating, but the little dear was gone. I called him, but he did not answer, and I ran like one mad down to the river. He wasn't there. Then I got up to the house somehow. Aunt was at the kitchen window. She screamed out when she saw me, for there was blood on my hair and face, it seems.

"Where's Charlie?" says she.

Then I knew he had not come home. But I told her all what had happened, and we hunted the house up and down. Mrs. Grenoble was in bed in her own room. Aunt peeped in there, but never told her what she was looking for.

"No need, until we are obliged, my dear," she said.

I was almost crazy by this time, but I had one hope. Perhaps the Oaks boys had taken him home. I went up there; and they, seeing me come, ran away and hid. But I told their father all the story, and he hunted them out and flogged them. After the flogging, one owned to hitting me with the stone; but neither of them had seen Charlie. I believe they told the truth then. So there was nothing left to do but to tell Mr. and Mrs. Grenoble.

She was almost frightened to death. Some tramp had carried him away, she felt sure. But Mr. Grenoble had not even that hope. He made certain he was drowned. He did not tell his wife so, but he had the river dragged, and stood watching the men at their work with a face I never can forget—a white, awful face!

Mrs. Grenoble had cried:

"Why did you leave my darling for a wretched bird?"

But he said:

"I shall never blame you, Betty. There is a fate in it. It is not your fault."

I think, dear, pretty Mrs. Grenoble always disliked me and blamed me. He knew the truth, and did not.

Oh I came very near dying of grief then, though I write so quietly about it now.

But three days passed, and, dead or alive, little Charlie was not found; and I had not slept all that while. And at last aunt put me to bed by force.

"Lie still," says she, "and say your prayers, and sleep. It is your duty."

So there she left me, locking me in.

It was a great garret room, with a window overhead almost. I never shall forget it. The sunlight coming in, bright and golden, as though no one was grieved or troubled in all the world. The bit of white curtain blowing, and the picture of the Madonna and child, just a coarse print, in a mahogany frame, that aunt had bought because it looked, she said, like Mrs. Grenoble and Charlie, hanging on the wall.

And thinking of the picture, and how Charlie always called it "Ittel Tarlie," trying to say his own name, I went to sleep, and being so weary, I slept until midnight.

I knew that, because just then the moon arose at eleven, and she was high and bright when I opened my eyes again.

There always was something queer and ghastly in the moonlight to me, and I thought maybe it was that that made the blood in my veins seem to run cold and yet tingling in them as it did once when I had a chill. And then I found I could not move a bit, and I tried to speak and could not. I could just turn my eyes, and I turned them, and there at the foot of my bed stood Charlie. Not the real, living Charlie, I knew in a moment; but there he was. His hair was wet, and hung down over his shoulders, and his clothes were wet too. He held out his hands to me. "I want to get home," he said, "and I can't. The bridge keeps me."

I wanted to ask "what bridge," and he answered me as though I had spoken. "The bridge with big stones," he said. "One of them keeps me. Tell pappa to look there, I want him to find me. I'm there, drowned. I went to the water and I fell in. Yes, pappa will find me if he goes there, under the stones, where the grass grows. Oh, I want to be brought home; tell pappa."

It seemed as though I should die. I tried to scream, and at last I did so, and I found I could move. I stretched out my arms to catch Charlie, standing there with his white hands held towards me, and his hair over his shoulders; but I only caught the air; he was gone. And aunt, hearing me shriek, ran to my room, and I told her all I had seen.

She said I was dreaming, and had a nightmare, and I must not tell anyone. But I did. I told Mr. Grenoble.

He answered not one word; but he took a boat and went to the bridge, three miles below, that next day, and there—it's the truth—how could I lie about such a solemn thing?—there they found what was left of Charlie. The stones of the bridge and some tall grass underneath, had somehow fastened the little body in.

"Just as he told you, Betty," said Mr. Grenoble—"amongst the rocks where the grass grew, the tall green rushes, thick along the riverside, just there."

"Just as he had told me."

I often think of those words. Who told me? Did he? Our pastor says God sent me a dream. That seems a pretty thought; but I was awake, not dreaming.

I think of it oftener than any one else, perhaps; for Mrs. Grenoble died that autumn, she and her babe, and he has married again and has other children. And I am still only a poor nurse-maid, and have never loved any little child since as I loved poor drowned Charlie.

◆

FORTITUDE.—To preserve equanimity of temper, when loaded by the shafts of calumny and malice, requires such an extraordinary degree of fortitude and passive courage as few individuals possess.

WIT AND HUMOR.

ANECDOTE OF JOSEPH THE SECOND.—Joseph opened the gardens of the palace of Schoenbrun for the accommodation of all classes. Several noblemen felt offended at this condescension. On representing to the emperor that by this proceeding there was no public garden left, in which they might converse with their equals, Joseph replied, "Gentlemen, on the same principle, what shall *I* do; would *I* not be obliged to descend into the vaults of the imperial tomb, under the capuchin church, if I wished to converse with *my* equals?"

COMPETITION.—While walking down Broadway a few days ago, we heard a water-cart-man cursing his ill luck in a most obstreperous manner. "That's always the way," said he; "a body can go at nothing now-a-days but some one else will cut him out and take the job from him!" "What is the matter?" inquired a bystander. "Why, you see, I got a contract to water this street to-day, and have got all ready, when it has commenced raining hard enough to drown an elephant."

FISHING.—Gruignoli, the son of a fisherman, a priest in a rich abbey in Florence, had a net spread every day on the table of his apartment, to put him, as he said, in mind of his origin. The abbot dying, this dissembled humility procured Gruignoli to be his successor; and the net was used no more. A friend who came to see him the day afterwards, on entering his apartment, said, "Where is the net?" "There is no further occasion for the net," replied Gruignoli, "when the fish is caught."

UNDERBIDDING.—A Frenchman assured one of our friends that his countrymen never buy an article at the seller's first price. "For instance," said he, "one of them came into my store the other day and priced a pair of silver buckles. I asked seven dollars."—"Eleven! I give you nine."—"Seven is the price, sir, not eleven."—"Seven! I give you five."

ECONOMY.—The father of an interesting family residing near Detroit, not long since stopped the only newspaper which he had ever allowed himself or family, and solely on the ground that he could not afford the expense. This man chews up fourteen dollars and sixty cents' worth of tobacco every year.

PROMISING YOUTH.—Mr. Coble, of Bridgeport, advertises his runaway apprentice, R. Strong, in the following style: "He can be identified by the fact that he has not combed his hair since the fourth of July, 1865, and cannot speak ten words at a time without uttering twenty falsehoods."

THE TUTOR AND HIS PUPIL.—A tutor of the college, lecturing a young man on his irregular conduct, added with great pathos, "The report of your vices will bring your father's gray hairs with sorrow to the grave." "I beg your pardon, sir," replied the pupil, "my father wears a wig."

A FEELING SQUEEZE.—A Maine editor says, he lately met a man who was carrying his hand in a sling, and who being inquired of for the reason, replied that one of the candidates had squeezed it so hard that he had no feeling in it since.

A FRIEND IN NEED.—A gentleman, "unaccustomed to public speaking," becoming embarrassed, whispered to his friend, "Quick, quick, give—give me a word!" upon which the other replied, "Yes, yes: what word do you want?"

"DOCTOR," said Mr. B. to his medical adviser one day, "isn't there a disease called *shingles*?"—"Yes, to be sure," replied Galen.—"Then I've got it for certain," says B., "for the *roof* of my mouth is broken out in a dozen places."

SEA-GOING.—He that cannot eat any thing dressed in any way, at any time, out of anything, and this under the sight of any dirt, the effect of any smell, the sound of any discord, and the feeling of any motion, should not go to sea.

A DYING West India planter groaned out: "Ah, Sambo, I'm going on a very long journey." "Never mind, massa," said the negro, consolingly, "him all down hill."

IT was an apt answer of a young lady, who, being asked where was her native place, replied, "I have none; I am the daughter of a Methodist minister."

SINGULAR.—A family of fifteen brothers are now living near Lyons, France, under one roof, and all unmarried. Is not this single blessedness?

A MALICIOUS correspondent tells of a young lady at one of the watering places who has been "nineteen" for five seasons.

NURSERY ELOQUENCE.—"Poor tottymouse, have little piece of caky and go rida with papa all pooty."

"I'LL be round this way in a minute," as the second hand said to the pendulum.

◆

CURRENT ITEMS.

A GENTLEMAN living in Sands street, Brooklyn, seems to be an especial favorite with burglars, who call on him at short intervals. A short time since he captured one of his nocturnal visitors and handed him over to the police; last week he shot the ear off of another; and a few nights after he had a pistol fight with a couple more, wounding one of them and capturing his hat.

AN exchange paper says that "a colony of porcupines was recently discovered by a company of persons picking berries near New Paltz, N. Y." Which were picking the berries, does not clearly appear. There were fifteen of the porcupines, and the monarch of the colony—a huge fellow—was killed while covering the retreat of his subjects.

ACCORDING to reports from Queen's County, some portions of that district are as unsafe for wayfarers as Hounslow Heath was in the days of Dick Turpin. Farmers are stopped on the highway when returning from market and robbed of every dollar, and their horses and fat cattle are stolen at night besides.

A FRENCHMAN of Lower Canada, considering his expenses too great, deliberately killed three of his children—girls—for the purpose, as he coolly avowed, of enabling him to "lay up a little something every year." It was with difficulty that the neighbors could be restrained from lynching the wretch.

A MAN was seen to leap into the East River, from the foot of Thirty-first street, one day last week, and efforts were made to rescue him, but in vain. His body was recovered and identified as that of a well-known lunatic, who, having escaped custody, carried out his long-cherished wish for suicide.

AT a United States Bankrupt Court in Dayton, Ohio, recently, the only creditor a young man (an applicant) had was a young lady who obtained a verdict of five thousand dollars against him for breach of promise of marriage. This claim she would not release.

A valuable horse, belonging to a farmer in Addison county, Vt., was bitten on the fetlock joint by a rattlesnake, and died in fifty minutes, in terrible agony. The reptile was trampled to death by the horse in its rearings and plungings, after the bite.

A FARMER in Iowa hearing a disturbance in his pig pen one night, went out to see what was the matter, and found a large black bear making free with his pork. Running to the house, he got his rifle, and killed the bear after a short chase.

THE Tenth Anniversary of the Fulton street Noon-day Prayer-Meeting was held last week. It is stated that hundreds of conversions, many of them of singular interest, have occurred at these meetings during the last ten years.

DURING a collision between two sloops on Lake Erie, one of the sailors was thrown between the two vessels and literally crushed flat. The unfortunate man shrieked horribly, and every effort was made to save him, but in vain.

A PICKPOCKET in Bristol, England, who brought strong testimony to prove himself "insane," was acquitted, but very properly sent to a lunatic asylum, by order of the court. He has since asked to be sent to the jail.

A WOMAN about forty years old, sick and apparently dying, was found in a vacant lot in South Brooklyn, a few days since. She said she had no home or friends, and was taken to the Long Island Hospital.

A FRENCH actor has become insane, because, having said something in one of his pieces which offended the Empress Eugenie, she gave an order prohibiting him from playing again in the presence of any of the nobility.

FRIDAY being regarded as an unlucky day in Paris, 25,000 persons less than usual ride on the omnibuses in that city on that day.

FIVE of the Viennese waiter-girls at the Paris Exposition have secured rich or titled husbands.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1867.

NO TRAVELLING AGENTS.—We employ no travelling agents. If any party pretends to act as such for us, you can put him down as a swindler.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A BUSY LIFE.

By HORACE GREELEY.

No. X.

MY FIRST EXPERIENCES IN NEW YORK.

Reaching Schenectady from Buffalo by line-boat—my sixth and last journey on "the raging canal"—I debarked about 6 P. M., and took the turnpike for Albany. I think a railroad between the two cities first and last named was completed soon afterward; but not a mile of iron track was then operated in the State, if (in fact) anywhere in America, save the little affair constructed to freight granite from the quarry at Quincy, Mass., to Boston. Night fell when I was about half way over; so I sought rest in one of the many indifferent taverns that then lined the turnpike in question, and was directed to sleep in an ante-room through which people were momently passing; I declined, and, gathering up my handful of portables, walked on. Half a mile farther, I found another tavern, not quite so inhospitable, and managed to stay in it till morning; when I rose and walked on to Albany. Having never been in that city before, I missed the nearest way to the day-boat, and, when I reached the landing, it was two or three lengths on its way to New York, having left at 7 A. M. I had no choice but to wait for another, which started at 10 A. M., towing a barge on either side, and reached next day the Emporium, where I, after a good view of the city as we passed it down the river, was landed, near Whitehall, at 6 A. M.

New York was then about one-third of her present size; but her business was not one-fourth so great as now; and her real size, counting her suburbs, and—considering the tens of thousands who find employment in and earn subsistence here, though sleeping outside of her chartered limits—was not one-fifth that of 1867. No single railroad pointed toward her wharves. No line of ocean steamers brought passengers to her hotels or goods to her warehouses from any foreign port. In the mercantile world, her relative rank was higher, but her absolute importance was scarcely greater, than that of Rio Janeiro or San Francisco is to-day. Still, to my eyes, which had never till yesterday gazed on a city of even 20,000 inhabitants, nor seen a sea-going vessel, her miles square of mainly brick or stone houses, and her furlongs of masts and yards, afforded ample incitement to a wonder and admiration not unlike to awe.

It was, if I recollect aright, the 17th of August, 1831. I was 20 years old the preceding February; tall, slender, pale and plain, with ten dollars in my pocket, summer clothing worth perhaps as much more, nearly all on my back, and a decent knowledge of so much of the Art of Printing as a boy will usually learn in the office of a country newspaper. But I knew no human being within two hundred miles, and my unmistakably rustic manner and address did not favor that immediate command of remunerating employment which was my most urgent need. However, the world was all before me; my personal estate, tied up in a pocket-handkerchief, did not at all encumber me; and I stepped lightly off the boat and away from the sound of the detested hiss of escaping steam, walking into and up Broad street in quest of a boarding-house. I found and entered one at or near the corner of Wall; but the price of board given me was $6 per week; so I did not need the giver's candidly kind suggestion that I would probably prefer one where the charge was more moderate. Wandering thence, I cannot say how, to the North River side, I halted next at 168 West street, where the sign of "Boarding" on a humbler edifice fixed my attention. I entered, and was offered shelter and subsistence at $2.50 per week, which seemed more rational, and I closed the bargain.

My host was Mr. Edward McGolrick; his place quite as much grogshop as boarding-house; but it was quietly, decently kept while I stayed in it, and he and his family were kind and friendly. I regret to add that liquor proved his ruin not many years afterward. My first day in New York was a Friday, and, the family being Roman Catholic, no meat was eaten or provided, which I understood; but when Sunday evening was celebrated by unlimited card-playing in that same house, my traditions were decidedly jarred. I do not imply that my observances were better or worse than my host's, but that they were different.

Having breakfasted, I began to ransack the city for work, and, in my total ignorance, traversed many streets where none could possibly be found. In the course of that day and the next, however, I must have visited fully two-thirds of the printing-offices on Manhattan island, without a gleam of success. It was midsummer, when business in New York is habitually dull; and my youth and unquestionable air of country greenness must have told against me. When I called at the *Journal of Commerce*, its editor, Mr. David Hale, bluntly told me I was a runaway-apprentice from some country office; which was a very natural, though mistaken, presumption. I returned to my lodging on Saturday evening, thoroughly weary, disheartened, disgusted with New York, and resolved to shake its dust from my feet next morning, while I could still leave with money in my pocket, and before its alms-house could foreclose upon me.

But that was not to be. On Sunday afternoon and evening, several young Irishmen called at Mr. McGolrick's, in their holiday saunterings about town; and, being told that I was a young printer in quest of work, interested themselves in my effort, with the spontaneous kindness of their race. One among them happened to know a place where printers were wanted, and gave me the requisite direction; so that, on visiting the designated spot next morning, I readily found employment; and thus, when barely three days a resident, I had found anchorage in New York.

The printing establishment was John T. West's, over McElrath & Bangs's publishing-house, 68 Chatham street, and the work was at my call simply because no printer who knew the city would accept it. It was the composition of a very small (32mo) New Testament, in double columns, of Agate type, each column barely 12 ems wide, with a centre column of notes in Pearl, barely 4 ems wide; the text thickly studded with references by Greek and superior letters to the notes, which of course were preceded and discriminated by corresponding indices, with prefatory and supplementary remarks on each Book, set in Pearl, and only paid for as Agate. The type was considerably smaller than any to which I had been accustomed; the narrow measure and thickly-sown Italics of the text, with the strange characters employed as indices, rendered it the slowest and by far the most difficult work I had ever undertaken; while the making up, proving, and correcting twice and even thrice over, preparatory to stereotyping, nearly doubled the time required for ordinary composition. I was never a swift type-setter; I aimed to be an assiduous and correct one; but my proofs on this work at first looked as though they had caught the chicken-pox, and were in the worst stage of a profuse eruption. For the first two or three weeks, being sometimes kept waiting for letter, I scarcely made my board; while, by diligent type-sticking through twelve to fourteen hours per day, I was able, at my best, to earn but a dollar per day. As scarcely another compositor could be induced to work on it more than two days, I had this job in good part to myself, and I persevered to the end of it. I had removed, very soon after obtaining it, to Mrs. Mason's shoemaker boarding-house at the corner of Chatham and Duane streets, nearly opposite my work; so that I was enabled to keep doing nearly all the time I did not need for meals and sleep. When it was done, I was out of work for a fortnight, in spite of my best efforts to find more; so I attended, as an unknown spectator, the sittings of the Tariff Convention, which was held at the American Institute, north end of the City Hall Park, and presided over by Hon. William Wilkins, of Pittsburgh, Pa. I next found work in Ann street, on a short-lived monthly, where my pay was not forthcoming; and the next month saw me back at West's, where a new work—a commentary on the Book of Genesis, by Rev. George Bush—had come in; and I worked on it throughout. The chirography was blind; the author made many vexatious alterations in proof; the page was small and the type close; but, though the reverse of *fat*, in printers' jargon, it was not nearly so abominably lean as the Testament; and I regretted to reach the end of it. When I did, I was again out of work, and seriously meditated seeking employment at something else than printing; but the winter was a hard one, and business in New York stagnant to an extent not now conceivable. I think it was early in December, when a "cold snap" of remarkable severity closed the Hudson and sent up the price of coal at a bound to $16 per ton, while the cost of other necessaries of life took a kindred but less considerable elevation. Our city stood as if besieged till spring relieved her; and it was much the same every winter. Mechanics and laborers lived a while on the scanty savings of the preceding summer and autumn; then on such credit as they could wring from grocers and landlords, till milder weather brought them work again. The earnings of good mechanics did not average $8 per week in 1831-2, while they are now double that sum; and living is *not* twice as dear as it then was. Meat may possible be; but Bread is not; Fuel is not; Clothing is not; while Travel is cheaper; and our little cars have enabled working men to live two or three miles from their work without serious cost or inconvenience; thus bringing Yorkville or Green Point practically as near to Maiden Lane or Broad street as Greenwich or the Eleventh Ward was. Winter is relatively dull now, but not nearly so stagnant as it formerly was. In spite of an inflated currency and high taxes, it is easier now for a working man to earn his living in New York than it was thirty to forty years ago.

About the first of January, 1832, I found employment on *The Spirit of the Times*, a weekly paper devoted to sporting intelligence, then started by Messrs. Wm. T. Porter and James Howe, two young printers, of whom the former, if not both, had worked with me at West's the previous fall. I think it was a little after midnight, on the 1st of January, 1832, that we compositors delivered the forms of the first number into the hands of the pressmen in an upper story in Fulton street. The concern migrated to Wall street the next spring; finding a location on or near the present site of the Merchants' Exchange; and I clung to it through the ensuing spring and summer; its foreman, Francis V. Story, being nearly of my own age, and thenceforth my devoted friend. But the founders and editors were also quite young; they were inexperienced in their calling, without capital or influential friends, having recently drifted from the country to the city much as I did; and their paper did not pay—I know it was difficult to make it pay *me*—especially through the dreary cholera summer of 1832. The disease was then new to the civilized world, while the accounts of its recent ravages in the far East were calculated to appal the stoutest heart; the season was sultry, the city filthy, and the water we drank such as should breed a pestilence at any time. New York had long enjoyed and deserved the reputation of having worse water than any other city of its size on earth; and the loose, porous sands whereon it was built rendered this fluid more and more detestable as the city grew larger and older. I am glad that it was my privilege to vote soon afterward for the introduction of the Croton, which I did right heartily, though a good many opposed it, (some of them voting "Brandy;") two of the wards, tenanted mainly by poor men, giving majorities against it. Twelve years intervened betwixt that vote and our celebration to welcome the actual introduction of the water—the fluid we drew from the wells growing steadily more and more repulsive and unwholesome; but the glad day came at last; and New York has ever since been a more eligible, healthful residence for rich or poor than it previously was.

We have had cholera and other epidemics since; but our city has never since been paralyzed as it was in the Summer of 1832. Those who could, mainly left us; scarcely any one entered the city; trade was dead and industry languished during that fatal Summer. I think I sometimes met two, if not three, palanquins bearing cholera patients to some hospital, in my short walk from dinner in Chatham street to my work in Wall street. One died at my boarding-house. I believe nearly all experienced symptoms of the plague, though it was most common and most fatal with those debilitated by intemperance or some form of sensual excess. But it passed off, as cool evenings came on; our fugitives and our business came back to us; and all, save the dead and the bereaved, was as before.

In October, I paid a visit, via Providence and Boston, to my relatives in New Hampshire; walking over the lower part of that State from Londonderry into eastern Vermont, and as far north as Newport, which I entered after dark of a stormy evening, having walked from Claremont (nine miles) in a rain at first gentle, but steadily increasing to the last. I never enter as a stranger a private house if I can avoid it; and I kept hoping to see a tavern-sign until I was so wet that it was of no consequence. When at last I reached the village, where I expected (but failed) to find an uncle living, it proved to be court-week, with the two taverns crowded to overflowing. Making my way through a thick cloud of tobacco-smoke to the office of one, I procured a remnant of supper and part of a bed in a private house at some distance, where I threw off my wet clothes and slept. In the morning, my clothes all responded to the call to duty till it came to my short boots; these utterly refused, until I had taken off my wet socks and thrust them into my pockets, when they were barely persuaded to resume their only serviceable position. I took breakfast, paid my bill, and walked off in the frosty morning air, considerably less supple-jointed than one should be at one-and-twenty. I never saw this Newport before, and have not seen it since.

I returned by the way I went; walking from Providence across to Norwich, Conn., where I took steamboat and arrived in New York on the second of our three days of State election. I gave my vote right heartily for the anti-Jackson ticket, but without avail—Jackson being overwhelmingly reëlected, with Marcy over Granger for governor. I soon found work which paid fairly at the stereotyping establishment of J. S. Redfield, and was there employed till the close of that year; when an opportunity presented for commencing business on my own account, which I improved, as will be set forth in my next.

MADAME DE POMPADOUR.

BY JAMES PARTON.

Some of our dear foreign friends are disposed to laugh when they hear an American speak of the government of the United States as "the best government the world ever saw." They laugh because they know little of other governments except their imposing forms, and little of ours except its defects. They hear, too, of the corruption of some of our city officials, but do not know that that corruption comes of the great masses of people whom foreign governments send to our shores all untrained in the duties of citizenship. A very little real knowledge of the interior working of governments will lead any one to infer, that to call a government the best the world ever saw, is, after all, no very extravagant praise; for there is nothing in which man has had less success than in getting himself well governed.

Madame de Pompadour, the fourth declared mistress of Louis XV. (Petticoat IV., Frederick the Great used to call her,) misgoverned France nineteen years, and cost France—Heavens! how impossible it is to say what this woman cost France! The thirty-six million francs which she personally expended were a trifling item in the incomputable total of the treasure which France wasted in the long wars which she fomented, and which left the kingdom shorn of its possessions in North America and India, and invited the deluge of the Revolution.

"After us, the deluge."

This was Madame de Pompadour's utterance—not Metternich's, to whom it is often attributed. After her the deluge came.

The first three mistresses of Louis XV. were three sisters, members of one of the noblest families of France, each of whom reigned in her turn. The first of the three the king repudiated and dismissed. The other two died of malignant diseases in the flower of their days, and were supposed to have been poisoned. The France of that day does not appear to have been scandalized at this horrid spectacle. The women did not cease to associate with their old friends, and they were courted most assiduously by the ancient nobility, by ministers, by princes, by ecclesiastics; and even the virtuous queen and her exemplary daughters were obliged to be civil to them and, on some occasions, to be served by them. A respectable lawyer of that day, whose diary has been published, speaks with contempt of the "prudes and devotees" who objected to the king's setting such a bad example to his subjects.

"Every one else has a mistress," says this respectable father of a family, "why shouldn't the king?"

When the last of these sisters had been snatched from the king's arms by death, he was still in the prime of life. He was a curious specimen of his kind, this Louis XV. From youth to old age, he never manifested the slightest interest in the welfare of his subjects, nor ever performed one duty of his station which he could avoid. Pleasure was his sole occupation, and he found the pursuit of pleasure insupportably tedious. He was tired of everything—tired of hunting, tired of pomp, tired of homage, tired of the pleasures of the table; everything wearied and disgusted him. When, therefore, his mistress suddenly died, a mistress to whom he was accustomed, and who relieved by her vivacity the tedium of his aimless existence, his time hung heavier than ever upon his hands, and the first concern of the court was to instal another mistress in her place.

"Transient amours," says a French writer, "satisfied him not, for he was, above all things, a man of habit."

At this time there was a young married woman in Paris, of singular beauty and rare accomplishments, named Madame d'Etioles, who, though of low and even discreditable birth, was much spoken of in the circles of fashion. She was the illegitimate daughter of a Madame Poisson, whose husband had made a fortune as a contractor for furnishing provisions to the army, and who had not only cheated the government, but had committed the abominable blunder of being found out. It was while he was in exile for this last offence that the child was born. Her father was a man of rank, who undertook the charge of her education, and lavished upon her every advantage which money could procure. The best masters in Paris taught her to sing, play, dance and ride, and she exhibited such an aptitude for these accomplishments that she could have shone in the ballet and triumphed upon the stage of the opera, and even carried off the palm at the circus. Her talent for mimicry was very great; she was an actress by nature.

"She is a morsel for a king," said her mother, while she was still a child.

At sixteen her beauty was exquisite. She was one of those sparkling, vivid, graceful French mermaids who have the form of a woman and the heart of a fish—consummate actresses, skilled in all the seductions of their sex, and as cold and calculating as an old money-changer. When she was nine years old, a fortune-teller predicted that she would be the mistress of Louis XV.—a prediction which she afterwards rewarded by settling upon the prophetess a pension of six hundred francs a year. From so early an age she appears to have kept this object always in view, and to have "gone into training" for the place.

A crowd of admirers surrounded her, one of whom was M. d'Etioles, her own father's nephew and heir, a young man who is described as "very little, very ugly, very ill-made, and very rich." The marriage was easily arranged, in the French fashion, between the father and mother. Mademoiselle Poisson became Madame d'Etioles, and went to live at a beautiful seat of her husband's family in the country, near Versailles. In France, marriage sets a woman free. Before marriage she is under more restraint than an American school-girl; but from the day of her marriage, when she nominally resigns her freedom forever, no one has any interest to watch or control her, except her husband, whose vigilance is seldom very strict and soon relaxes. Little d'Etioles doted upon his syren, and was proud to see gathered in her drawing-room the most noted wits and authors of France; while the syren herself, in the very ardors of the honey-moon, regarded her marriage only as a preliminary step to the "greatness" of her early dream.

Madame d'Etioles, not being of the rank which gave access to the palace, had set herself a task of extreme difficulty, and it cost her nearly three arduous years to get so far as to catch the king's eye. Hunting was the king's constant employment. On the days of the "great hunting," when a deer was the object of the chase, an extensive forest was the scene of the royal exploits, and a great number of people assembled to witness them, besides the nobles who attended the king. Here was her opportunity. Mounted sometimes upon a beautiful horse, which she rode with unequalled grace; at other times riding in a rose-colored phaeton, clad herself in blue, or in a blue phaeton, she being dressed in rose-color; going sometimes on foot, attired in the costume of a huntress, she would appear among the dogs, or flash into view as the king passed, or place herself in an attitude of studied carelessness where the king's eye might fall upon her during a halt. These manœuvres were at last successful. The king saw her, spoke of her, looked for her, grew accustomed to see this bright apparition of the forest, and missed her if she did not appear.

But this was not enough to provoke the jaded senses of such a man. Every year, on a certain Sunday evening, a grand masked ball was given in the City Hall of Paris, which was frequently attended by the king. This was another opportunity. At the ball of 1745 the king was accosted by a graceful, agile creature, exquisitely dressed, who whispered a hundred pretty nothings in his ear, excited his curiosity, and then teased and eluded it. At the proper time she yielded to the entreaties of the king and removed her mask, and he beheld the lovely huntress of the forest! This sufficed. A few weeks after, Madame d'Etoiles was installed in the palace as the king's mistress. She was presented to the queen; and all that was high and powerful in France bent before her. The court was scandalized—not that the king had taken another mistress, but that that mistress was not a woman of ancient rank. She was soon created a marchioness, and the name of the de Pompadours was assigned her—a noble family, recently extinct. Her husband was removed to a more distant province, and consoled with place and pension.

Once publicly acknowledged as the king's mistress, Madam de Pompadour employed all her talents to retain her place and increase her power. The king's favorite minister, who refused to come into her plans and treated her with polite contempt, she caused to be dismissed and exiled to his estates; and after giving this alarming evidence of her authority, she reigned supreme over France. Her great task remained—to amuse an idle and ignorant king, who had long ago exhausted all the coarser pleasures; and it was in this that she displayed consummate ability and perseverance. She sang beautifully, and accompanied her songs upon the instruments of that day with more than the skill of a master. She was an excellent story-teller, reciter and mimic. She knew how to vary and heighten her charms by assuming new and striking costumes—sometimes dazzling all beholders by the splendor of her attire; and enchanting them, at other times, by suddenly appearing at an out-of-doors fete in the dress of a Swiss peasant. During the season of Lent, when the theatres were closed and balls were forbidden, she gave a series of concerts, at which she was the principal performer; and these concerts at length became an opera, in which it was still herself who shone without a peer. When such entertainments began to pall upon the taste of the royal idler, she organized in the palace a complete theatre, the company of which was composed of nobles, princes, and high-born ladies—herself being the directress and leading actress. Ballet, opera, drama, comedy, and burlesque could be performed on her stage equally well, for the deficiencies of the company were supplied by talent drawn from the public theatres. In this theatre a duke was stage-manager, an abbé was the librarian, a prince played the bassoon, a marquis the violin, and a prince was one of the dancers in the ballet. Such was the frivolity of the Court, that a card of admission to one of the performances was as eagerly sought and as keenly intrigued for as an appointment to a valuable office or a commission in the army. The chief waiting-maid of Madame de Pompadour relates, in her Memoirs, that a great lord offered to obtain for one of her relations a lieutenancy in the army, if she would get him the privilege of playing a silent part in one of the plays.

"The thing was done," writes the maid. "I obtained the commission, and the great lord thanked madame as warmly as if she had made him a duke."

The talents of Madame de Pompadour for the stage were such that she was the chief attraction of this theatre, and she was continually presenting herself before the eyes of the king in new and bewitching costumes, and charming him with the display of unexpected talents. Her triumph was complete and permanent. Her reign ended only with her life.

The king lavished upon her the resources of the kingdom. I have before me the list of her servants, with the wages paid to each. She had a secretary and chief of household, at 6,000 francs a year; a physician, at 3,000 francs; a steward, at 2,000 francs; a butler, at 1,800; three footmen, at 200, 150, and 100 francs; three *femmes de chambre*, at 150 francs each; a stewardess, at 400 francs; a wardrobe-keeper, at 100; a chief-cook, at 600; a second cook, at 400; two assistant cooks, at 200 each; a pastry-cook, at 400; a roaster, at 400; five kitchen-men, at 200 each; four market-men and provision-keepers, at 400 each; a pantry-man, at 400; an assistant-pantryman, at 150; an outrider, at 800; a chief footman, at 600; four lacqueys, at 400 each; a torch-bearer, at 300; *two negroes, at* 900; a gate-keeper, at 400; a door-keeper at 400; two porters, at 600 each; two sedan-carriers, at 400; three coachmen, at 800 each; three postillions, at 500 each; four grooms, at 450 each; three embroidery-women, at 500 each. Fifty-six servants to wait upon a woman who had also at her command the multitudinous servants of the king!

I have also before me the catalogue of her effects, acquired during the nineteeen years of her reign, as compiled by herself, a short time before her death. It appears from this catalogue that she possessed silver plate worth half a million francs and gold plate worth 150,000 francs. She had also 98 gold boxes valued at 3,000 francs each, and diamonds worth a million and three-quarters of francs. Her collection of other precious stones, she valued at 460,000 francs; and her old porcelain at 150,000 francs. Her library was only valued at 12,000 francs, and her pictures at 60,000 francs. She possessed nine estates in lands and houses, worth about two millions of francs. She says, in this curious document, that during "the nineteen years of her reign," she had expended in pocket money, thirteen hundred thousand francs; in wages, eleven hundred thousand francs; in provisions, three millions and a half; in amusing the king by the theatre and in entertainments of other kinds, four millions; in gifts to the poor, 150,000 francs; in gifts to servants, 100,000 francs; in maintaining her horses, thirteen hundred thousand francs; and in the purchase of carriages and horses, eighteen hundred thousand francs. The whole sum received by her from the king was thirty-six millions of francs, fully equal in purchasing power to the same number of our present dollars.

It was a large sum to pay for the amusement of one poor, foolish, ignorant man; but this amount, as before observed, was trifling compared with the cost of the needless war in which Madame de Pompadour involved her country. The real belligerent powers in the Seven Years' War were Austria and Prussia, or Maria Theresa and Frederick the Great. The empress, one of the proudest of women, and a rigorous Catholic, stooped so far as to write to this woman, calling her "My Sister," as though she were Queen of France. Frederick, on the contrary, who was not a very proud man, and who was an unbeliever in all religion, disdained to recognize her existence. When Voltaire brought to him a flattering message from Madam de Pompadour, he merely replied—

"I don't know her."

Many causes conspired to involve France in that most disastrous contest, but the *decisive* cause was, that the empress flattered, and the Prussian King wounded the vanity of the mistress of Louis XV.

She outlived her favor, but retained her power to the last; for when the king no longer loved her, she not only permitted, but encouraged his infidelities. In the wearisome toil of amusing a man who was the least "amusable" of mortals, she wore out her life, and died, after a lingering illness, in the forty-second year of her age. But to the last hour she governed France. Even while she was dying, she received the report of the officer whose duty it was to examine the letters that passed through the post office, and extract from them whatever he thought would interest the king or the mistress. No one lamented her death. The day of her funeral was rainy, and the king looking out of a window, carelessly said:

"Madame has a dull day for her journey."

Her place was soon supplied by Madame de Barry, a woman from the streets, but of remarkable beauty, upon whom the king lavished millions upon millions of the people's money; some of which, however, found its way back to the people's treasury, when, in the early days of the revolution, they cut off the Countess de Barry's beautiful head, and confiscated her estates.

It is of such things as these that I think, when I hear people sneering at "the best government the world ever saw."

ONWARD AND UPWARD!

Like the Roman braggart who sailed from Ostia to subjugate Britain and returned with no other trophies than a few crustacea gathered on its coast, many young men start in life with a great show of energy and a professsed determination to conquer fortune, only to make a failure that contrasts ridiculously with their previous vaunts. The world abounds with such shell-gatherers on the rocky shores that hedge in Persistent Effort's Dorado. Perseverance is what they lack. Their energy is short-winded. They climb a little way, and finding the ascent rough, fall back, disheartened. We recommend such weak-handed cragsmen to read "Pilgrim's Progress," and lay its noble lessons to heart. It is, in most cases, as impossible to achieve worldly success as spiritual salvation without a vigorous, determined and prolonged struggle for it. Bunyan's glorious allegory includes a useful temporal lesson in its religious one. "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," whether it be to acquire a competence on earth or to lay up treasures in heaven. The great fault of the young men of our day—and it has been the same in all other days, we presume—is a want of capacity, or rather of *inclination*, for continuous exertion. They are energetic by *spurts*. When they meet with unexpected difficulties in one pursuit they are too apt to abandon it and try another. This is impolitic as well as unmanly. The last man to succeed in anything is the *waverer*. Christian was a go-ahead youth—he was all *grit*, as they say out West. Neither sloughs, nor wild beasts, nor giants, nor fiends could drive him from the path he had chosen. He had made up his mind to reach the City Beautiful, and he reached it. He didn't stop to deliberate at Castle Dangerous; he defied Giant Despair. Let the pilgrim of worldly independence make that Heaven-scaling youth his exemplar and guide.

FUN AS A PROFESSION.

The business of making people laugh is no joke. Yoricks, whose specialty it is to set the table in a roar, are generally, when off duty, a chop-fallen tribe. Writers who produce largely for the humorous papers are, in at least three cases out of five, gloomy and taciturn. Comic actors, as a class, have always been notorious for their melancholy bearing behind the scenes. Liston, the English comedian, the expression of whose face, even in repose, was so ludicrous that it provoked shouts of laughter, was one of the most confirmed hypochondriacs of his day; and "Billy Williams," for years the leading representative of broad farce in this country, used to blubber like a whipped schoolboy whenever anything went wrong with him. When Dominique, the French *farçeur*, was convulsing all Paris with his drolleries, a physician of that city was one day visited by a miserable-looking man, who asked what he should do to get rid of a horrid desire to commit suicide which continually haunted him. "Go and see Dominique," said the doctor. "Alas!" replied the unfortunate wretch, "I am Dominique." Forced humor is indeed a sorry business. There is a reactionary principle in human nature which renders depression the inevitable consequent of overstrained merriment. The philosophy of all this is, that although wit and humor are cheerful faculties when suffered to develop themselves spontaneously, they are quite the reverse when compelled to drudge. In fact, no one faculty can be overworked except at the expense of all the others. To keep the body in a healthy, vigorous, elastic condition, all its attributes must be properly exercised. It is the same with the mind.

Remembering and Forgetting.

It is a good thing to be able to remember, but it is no less desirable to be able to forget. Happiest among men is he whose will exercises the strongest control over his memory, for he can bury his cares in oblivion, and record the pleasant incidents of his life where "every day he turns the leaf to read them."

Some men can remember nothing. Theirs is a great misfortune, for experience is of no use to them. They walk in darkness, minus the lamp by which wiser feet are guided, and of course stumble as they go. There are others whose vile forte it is to remember pleasurably all that good men strive to dismiss from their recollection. Their minds are like filters, which permit that which is pure and excellent to run through them, but retain whatever is coarse and noxious. Their fund of immoral information is inexhaustible, but of facts which illustrate the best traits of human nature or the wisdom and benevolence of its author, their memories are bare. There is a very large class that cannot remember benefits—another that never forgets wrongs. In short, the specialties of memory and of forgetfulness are manifold.

—The *New York Leader*, edited by A. OAKEY HALL, Esq., in speaking of the great London Magazines, *Temple Bar*, *All the Year Round*, *Belgravia*, and others, says:

"There is not a number of the *Ledger* that does not contain more original sketches and better poetry than could be selected from all those serials put together."

—The new story, the publication of which we commenced last week—ABNER GAULT; or, *The Hand of Fate*, by MARY KYLE DALLAS—will, we feel confident, please our readers.

THE GREAT DIPPER (URSA MAJOR.)

BY ETHEL LYNN.

Home again! O'er the tops of the quivering pines
Ursa Major unchangably glimmers and shines.
Good-bye, Southern Cross! get you under the sea,
Far dearer this homely old star shape to me;
I am lonely and home-sick wherever I go,
Unless dipping darkness, the Dipper lies low.

I have missed you, dear stars. When the caravan slept
On the Desert, I soft to the tent-door have crept,
And watched, if above the horizon there shone
The form so familiar I claimed as my own,
Have counted on ocean each wave tossing snow,
Until, lo! northern skies, where the Dipper was low.

It shone when my mother was passing away,
She caught from her window each God-given ray;
So, holding my hand, bid me think of her still
When her body should rest on the yew-shaded hill,
Then gave the last kiss she could ever bestow,
And left me forever. The Dipper hung low.

It lighted our troth-plight. Along the wild shore
Great waves crouching came with a hoarse, hungry roar,
Till Bessie grew timid and came close to me,
That night as we walked all alone by the sea.
We trod very slowly the way we should go,
Till the night came apace; till the Dipper was low.

It shone when the fire took the wealth I had won,
When in trust I had faltered. When this, He had done,
Left my hot heart impatient, ah, still I recall
How I looked on the ashes of hovel and hall;
And then—off, away, from the earth's troubled woe
To the calm, patient stars. The Dipper hung low.

And now poor and lonely, a weary old man,
I count up the mercies that lighted my span
In the past. For the future I wait, only wait
Till the master shall open the heavenward gate.
But I know that whene'er on that journey I go
The stars will be shining, the Dipper be low.

* * * * * * *

"Found dead in the morning."
Awhile before dawn,
His chair to the window had closely been drawn;
And thus facing Heaven as one unafraid,
The soul from its tenement peacefully strayed;
The morning wind lifted his hair to and fro,
Unchided, unheeded, the Dipper was low.

ABNER GAULT;

OR,

THE HAND OF FATE.

By MARY KYLE DALLAS.

CHAPTER V.

"IDENTIFICATION."

Mrs. Burleigh and her friend the lawy, erwith Peter Plumb upon the box, were driven rapidly to the police station where the body now lay. The lady sobbed and trembled, and wrung her little white hands all the journey through, and Mr. Kestrel for a time forbore to disturb her. At last he put a question which had been upon his lips for a long time.

"What could have induced you, with your small means, to offer so large a reward, Mrs. Burleigh. Probably the end would have been answered as well by a mere advertisement."

Mrs. Burleigh looked up with her face flushed scarlet.

"If he were alive I know that Albert would answer for himself," she said; "and being dead—you know—I——It is dreadful to speak of such things, but I and Eugene inherit the property, and I can afford it."

"That must be the truth, at least," thought Mr. Kestrel; "but why need the woman look as though she were lying, when she is not.

"You must think me a mercenary wretch, but I felt obliged to answer the question," said Mrs. Burleigh, sobbing. "Of course I knew how the will ran. If poor Albert died without heirs, Eugene and his heirs came into possession, and you know, dear Eugene. though he left so little, made full provision for such an event in his will."

"But Albert was married," said Mr. Kestrel. "If his wife should survive——"

"But that is not possible," said Mrs. Burleigh. "They went in the boat together, of course. That was their object in going out—and all her clothes and the poor baby's are at my house. The poor, dear baby," and Mrs. Burleigh wept again.

The rest of the drive was performed in silence—and when at last they reached their destination and were ushered into the apartment where the body lay, Mr. Kestrel's own emotions quite overcame him. He could think of nothing but the bright young life just quenched—for he had been fond in a way of Albert Burleigh, and had hoped to the last that he would turn up alive, as so many missing men do.

But there, stretched upon the litter on which he had been brought to the place, lay a motionless form, with dark hair and well-developed limbs.

The face, scarcely a face, now that wave and rock had done their worst upon it, it is true—and not to be indentified; but the general height and breadth the same, and the jewelry, which had been in safe keeping, and were now produced, articles which he knew to belong to the Burleigh family.

"You know these, Mr. Kestrel," sobbed Mrs. Burleigh. "You know this pin that Eugene's father wore, and his pet ring—and this handkerchief, I suppose poor Albert's wife marked it for him. The name is done in hair, you see. I cannot swear that that poor body is Albert's, but these are some of the things that he wore, and so it *must* be, you know—and I suppose the wife and baby, poor, poor dears, will be found very soon." And never had Mrs. Burleigh's voice sounded so false to Mr. Kestrel as when she uttered the last sentence—though why it should, as before, he could not tell.

But the ornaments which lay within his hand were proofs of the identity of the dead man, and the handkerchief bore his name. Therefore, Mr. Kestrel avowed his belief that the remains were those of Albert Burleigh, and Mrs. Burleigh, in her own womanish way, declared she knew the pin and ring, and that her brother-in-law had such hair—though, of course, she could not say it *was* him, only it seemed likely."

And all that was necessary was established, and the remains prepared for a burial befitting a rich gentleman.

Mrs. Burleigh shed a good many tears, and impressed people with the idea that her feelings were very intense, but she did not go to the funeral—nor could she identify the child and the mother in any of the drowned women and children on whom she was called to look for the next month.

"It *might* be," she always said; "of course they were drowned—but she could not be sure about a lady she had known so short a time and a little young baby."

And in the end it was decided that when the boat Albert Burleigh must have hired was upset, the bodies of his wife and child had either sunk or been so altered that they could not be identified.

Certainly they were not in the land of the living. And after due time had elapsed Mrs. Burleigh, by virtue of her husband's will, came into the property, which had he lived, would have been his, had his brother died before him—and left her humble cottage to live in the Burleigh Mansion, which she had purchased from its present owners—to whom Albert had sold it on coming into his inheritance. Peter Plumb had received his reward, and people said it was generous of Mrs. Burleigh to offer such a large one.

And the pin and ring had been sent to him by an unknown hand, and he had his public house, and he was content.

And Mrs. Kestrel rejoiced in her friend's good fortune and was glad her trouble was over. But Mr. Kestrel, perhaps, because he was a lawyer, was not satisfied, but kept on wondering for a long while. Why, when Mrs. Burleigh and Peter Plumb were both plainly speaking the truth, they should have looked and spoken as though they were uttering falsehoods.

CHAPTER VI.

SENT TO SCHOOL.

Abner Gault, as every one now called him, whatever his real name may have been, lived and throve under the fostering care of good Mrs. Gault.

The fondest grandmother never went more thoroughly into the process of spoiling a child. "Abner wants it," was a reason for anything. "Abner don't like it," was equally decisive to the contrary of anything proposed; and the boy was not strengthened in mind by the regime, although the pure sea air and excellent food gave him a robust body.

He was a pretty child, with Grecian features, and soft, fair hair, and those wilful, pretty ways which only childhood have so often about them, and which at an early age are generally admired by aunts and grandmothers and rather injudicious parents.

Little King Hal. his mother had called her baby, and certainly he had always remained king, and always would while his adopted mother held sway at "The Washington."

Even Betty, grim and gray, who never hurried herself for the grandest gent. who ever stopped at the tavern, had been known to forsake everything at Master Abner's baby mandate, to toss him up a sweet cake, or to climb to the garret for a ball of twine for his new kite.

He hated his letters, so he was not made to learn them. "He was young enough still at five, poor baby," said Mrs. Gault.

MRS. GAULT PRESENTS ABNER TO MR. CRUB.

He wanted a pony and it was bought, and he, in his new blue suit, went flying through the village on its back. He wanted a dog, and so "The Washington" entertained a mighty St. Bernard, of whom Mrs. Gault stood in mortal dread. Everything but a pistol the good old lady bought for him. That his own safety forbade; and a fine time she had with her five-year-old darling when she declared that gunpowder was not to be entrusted to his discretion on the coming Fourth of July.

The monarch of "The Washington" raved in his baby way, and stamped and clenched his little hands, and ground his little teeth until Mrs. Gault cried, and then he put his arms about her neck and said:

"Don't cy, muzzer. Oo shall dit me lots of candy, and I won't have a dun."

So Mrs. Gault bought candy enough to have ruined any less perfect digestion, and called her boy a cherub.

She could almost have cried herself to think there was one wish in his little breast which she could not gratify. But where Abner could not hurt himself, no objection could prevail against his fancy; and so he grew to be ten years old without having learned to read.

Then Mrs. Gault's conscience began to accuse her of not having done her duty, and taking judicious advice, she resolved to send her pet to a boarding-school, since nothing could make him learn at home.

It was a terrible ordeal to Mrs. Gault. She shed oceans of tears over it. How could she live from one Saturday to another without her darling?

Abner, on his part, stoutly declared that he wouldn't go, and in her despair Mrs. Gault appealed to her minister, a venerable Methodist, as to the best thing to be done.

"He ought to learn suthin', you know," said the good lady, "and I ought to make him go. You said so yourself; but *how* am I to make him go when he says he won't?"

"Command him sternly, Mrs. Gault," said the clergyman.

"La! I *couldn't*; and he'd know I wasn't mad," said Mrs. Gault.

"When I was young parents whipped their children," said the old man. "There are a good many theories to the contrary now. But when you have Scripture for the fact that to spare the rod is to spoil the child, you needn't be afraid of doing your duty. Take a switch to him if he won't obey, Mrs. Gault—take a switch to him."

Mrs. Gault's blood boiled. But for her reverence for the cloth, she might have "taken a switch" to the clergyman himself; but she was forced, as she afterwards told the tailor's wife, to sit and pour out her tea and say nothing, while he went on with anecdotes of people who had turned out horribly only because they had not been sufficiently whipped during their childhood, and of a man who had said to his mother just before he was hung:

"Mother, you never whipped me, or I should not have come to *this*."

She bore it as patiently as she could, and consoled herself by vowing inwardly that nothing should ever make her whip her pet—minister, or no minister; and took her next counsel of the tailor's wife.

"I've engaged schooling for Abner," she said, in tears, as she sat in that lady's back parlor, "and I'm fitting him out—though it goes to my heart to send him off; and now he says he won't go. He must learn, you know, and the Reverend Mister Straitline says I'm to whip him—and that I *won't* do, and—you've had children yourself—what would *you* do?"

"I whipped mine, and whip 'em still," said the tailor's wife. "They need it, mine do; but I know you've fetched Abner up different. I'm sure I can't tell, unless, indeed—unless, Mrs. Gault, you was to give him a new suit of clothes on condition of going. Husband has the prettiest drab-mixed I ever see, jest in yesterday; with gilt buttons, 'twould be perfect."

"I shall get him two suits, any way," said Mrs. Gault; "but he'd rather run barefoot in the orchard in his worst than be dressed up, I do believe. I've never had such a dreadful thing to do before. To drive him from his own home—I—to do it! oh, dear! oh, dear!"

The tailor's wife sympathized, but could not advise; and, as a last resource, having declared that it was a sin and shame, and she'd have nothing to do with it, Mrs. Gault went to Mr. Chumps, the barber, or rather sent for him to come to her.

"I thought I'd ask you to tea to-night," she said. "When Aby is away with Mr. Chittling's boy playing, and will take tea at the Chittlings, because I wanted to talk about him. They say I must send him to school. He's twelve years old, and don't know a letter. And he won't go. How can I make him, and is it my duty, when I'm so fond of him?"

"It *is* your duty, ma'am," said the barber, "your plain duty. What is a man without eddication, I'd like tew know? Why he's a'most a contemptible critter. No matter how rich he air, he's as contemptible a critter as he ken be. Knowledge is a thing nobody can't never know too much of. Why look at *me*—instruction made me what *I am*. Ignorance debases a man; knowledge elevates him tew a pinnacle o' greatness. Eddecate your boy, eddecate him, Mrs. Gault—thank you! I take sugar and very little cream, ma'am—eddecate the boy, by all means."

"I know you're correct, Mr. Chumps," said the landlady, "but the thing is he won't go. He says he won't."

"Du tell," said the barber. "Hev you tried persuasion?—how delicious your biscuits are!—hev you tried persuasion?"

"Almost on my bended knees," said Mrs. Gault. "I've said, 'Oh, Aby, it won't ever do for you to grow up not knowing nothing.' And he says, 'I don't want to go to school, and I *won't*, and I hate books, and I won't learn 'em.' And what can *I* do?—do help yourself, Mr. Chumps."

"Then you must try *coercion*," said the barber, obeying the request.

"Co—er——La! *You* don't mean *whip* him, Mr. Chumps?"

Mr. Chumps *had* meant it, but he saw it would never do to admit the fact.

"Coercion may mean a great many things, but we will pass it over, Mrs. Gault. What du you say tew *stratagem?*" said Mr. Chumps.

"Isn't that something dreadful?" asked the landlady.

"Not in this case, not in this case," said the barber, "it is for his own good. You say to him, 'Aby, my dear, would you like to go to New York, and go to the menagerie?' He naturally says, 'Yes.' You take him. He enjoys himself. Afterwards you say, 'Now we will call on Mrs. So-and-so.' You call. Mrs. So-and-so keeps the school, and you leave him. Slip away on the sly, and it is done."

"To deceive my poor boy so," said Mrs. Gault. "It's almost worse than whipping. But what else can I do. Only don't call it Stratagem; say, Misleading him for his own good. And it is for his good, you know."

Certainly it was that, Mr. Chumps asserted, and Mrs. Gault, with many tears took his advice, and proposed New York, and the Museum, and the Menagerie to her pet in tones which certainly would have awakened the suspicions of any one of more mature years than her adopted son.

But Abner had no idea that he was being imposed upon. He went into ecstasies of delight on the subject of lions, and elephants, rejoiced in the prospect of seeing the dwarf and the monkeys, but was rather nervous on the subject of the giant, who was the most formidable character alluded to in his toy-books. He brought the tears into Mrs. Gault's eyes, she said, "to hear the innocent critter go on so, and know what she was a-goin' to do to him."

"What's that trunk going for?" asked Master Abner, as he clambered into the light wagon which was to take them to the depot; "and what's in it, ma?"

"Clothes, pet; we might get ourn dirty, you know," said Mrs. Gault.

"And what's written on it?" asked Abner.

"There, now, if you could read you'd know," said Mrs. Gault.

"It's jest as good to be told," said Abner.

"Oh my, no," said Mrs. Gault. "Besides, you can't always have me to tell you."

"Why not?" asked Abner.

"Because I might be took from you," said Mrs. Gault.

"Who'd take you?" said Abner, in alarm—"the giant?"

"Bless you, no," said Mrs. Gault. "You'll get no harm from the poor giant, who is only a man growed too big and made a show of; and p'raps I mightn't be took. The young aint allers spared longest; sometimes they goes first."

"Where?" asked Abner.

"To Heaven," said Mrs. Gault.

"I won't ever go to Heaven—see if I will," said Abner.

"You naughty boy. You must pray; you may," said Mrs. Gault.

"So the minister said in Sunday school," said Abner. "But I know just how it is—you have to be all the time as if you were in meeting."

"La, now how nice that would be," said Mrs. Gault.

"No indeed," said Abner. "I like to play."

"Perhaps there is some kind of Heavenly play the little angels have to play at," said Mrs. Gault.

"I don't believe it," said Abner, stoutly. "Anyhow, I'd rather live."

And Mrs. Gault felt she had better drop the subject, though she was in a measure strengthened in her purpose by this display of Abner's ignorance, and the thought that he certainly ought to be able to read his Bible and study the Shorter catechism.

It was with a heavy heart that the poor woman went through the Museum and the Menagerie, knowing what was to follow; but Abner enjoyed himself mightily. He fed the elephant with cakes and apples, and bestowed nuts upon the monkeys. He peered into the cages and begged leave to "poke" the lion with Mrs. Gault's umbrella, and he enraged the dwarf by exclaiming audibly in that gentleman's presence, "What a horrid old baby!" We regret to state that he likewise stuck a pin into the arm of one of the "Children of the woods," then on exhibition, causing it to exclaim, "Get away, you sassy nigger!" although the showman had just declared that it was not conversant with any human tongue, but had been captured in the interior of Africa by a party of adventurers, etc., etc.; and insisted upon having a certain model of "Chinese junk" to take home with him.

After this he made himself ill with good things and went with a "pain under his apron" down to the cab with Mrs. Gault.

"No. — ——— street, near Broadway. It's Mr. Crub's school for young gentlemen," said Mrs. Gault, in a whisper, to the driver.

And to Mr. Crub's school for young gentlemen the pair were driven—Abner soon recovering sufficiently to look out of the window and ask questions, which Mrs. Gault found it at that moment very terrible to answer.

"Where are we going *now*, ma?" said young Abner. "Say, ma, where are we going *now?*"

"To see a lady, Aby dear," said Mrs. Gault.

"Who?" asked Abner.

"A very nice lady," said Mrs. Gault. "Oh dear, oh dear!"

"What's the matter, ma?" asked Aby. "Have you eat too many green apples too?"

"Oh no, there aint nothin' the matter," said Mrs. Gault, who always grew particularly ungrammatical under the influence of emotion. "There aint nothin' the matter with me, Aby, and how I'm to go through it I dunno no more'n the dead."

Abner stared. Just then the cab stopped.

"Mr. Crub's, mum," said the driver. "Here you are."

And after a necessary delay caused by the settling of such a bill for carriage hire as Mrs. Gault had never dreamt of before, that lady led her adopted child like a pet lamb to the sacrifice through the portals of Mr. Crub's boarding-school. The awful moment had come at last.

She stood in the presence of a gentleman of small dimensions, with a bald head and a smoothly-shaven face, who had teacher written all over him as plainly as though the words had been stamped upon his forehead in ink. He had thin, bony hands and a dogmatical mouth, and that general air of being monarch of all he surveyed, which seems to arise from constant companionship with small boys. His cuffs were so clean that there seemed no possibility of their ever needing doing up, and his feet in slippers looked like a woman's.

"Mrs. Gault, I presume?" he said; and that bewildered woman almost sobbed:

"Oh, yes! oh, yes! and how very wicked I do feel!"

The teacher smiled blandly.

"Ah, I remember," he said—"I remember. The lad is averse to the arrangement. I recall your note. Yes, yes. Mrs. Crub, this is Mrs. Gault."

And Mrs. Crub, a fat lady with very light hair, arose from her seat by the window.

"I've seen so many parents go through this trial," said that lady, with her head on one side; "but after a few weeks, when improvement commences, they are so thankful that they had the courage to do it. Now here, Mrs. Gault, is a testimonial from a parent—a ma—who was taken from the door in hysterics on consigning her twins to our care—a silver teapot. You observe the inscription. It reflects credit on Mr. Crub."

"So it does," said Mrs. Gault, anxious to be polite, but barely seeing the silver teapot through her tears—"so it does."

"And this pair of vases. A lovely child, who grew up here, as I may say, presented them to Mr. Crub; and these books are all mementoes."

"It must be a great gra—gra—gra—gratification to you both," sobbed Mrs. Gault.

"What's the matter? Did that man hurt you?" asked Abner. "You're always crying to-day."

"We had best end this painful scene," said Mr. Crub. "My dear, engage the child's attention. Mrs. Crub will show you something very pretty, Abner. The specimens, my dear. After you, Mrs. Gault. No—no leave-takings. You will alarm him."

And the door closed upon Mrs. Gault.

"What shall I do?" said the old lady, wringing her hands. "How cruel of me, and him an orphan. Oh me! oh me! Be good to him, won't you? He's never been from home before."

"He will be as happy as a skylark very soon, no doubt," said Mr. Crub.

"I'm sure I hope he'll be happy; and his pill—pill—piller cases, and sheets, and nap—kin ri—ngs are in the trunk, and his silver fork and spoon. Oh my, what will my home be like?"

"You'll have him home for the holidays," said Mr. Crub. "Is your cab waiting?"

"No," said Mrs. Gault. "I've been cheated enough. I'll take a car—oh! dear, dear—to the ferry. And to go without a kiss."

And, miserable to the last degree, Mrs. Gault allowed Mr. Crub to put her into a car, and was driven away.

Then Mr. Crub returned to the house.

He entered the parlor with his usual self-satisfied gait; but came to a sudden halt. A little figure, with clenched hands and face crimson with fury, stood before him.

"Where's ma?" cried this small object in shrill treble. "Where's ma, man?"

"Address me in the future as 'sir,'" said Mr. Crub. "Your adopted mother has returned home."

"Without *me?*" said the child. "Let me go. I will go home. I hate this house, and I hate you. Open the door!"

"What shall we do with the dreadful child?" asked Mrs. Crub.

"I'll undertake to subdue him," said Mr. Crub, proudly. "Abner, listen to me: You are now placed at school for the purpose of——"

"Is this school?" screamed Abner, interrupting him. "I won't stay here. Open the door, you nasty man!"

"You have never been under judicious control, Abner," said Mr. Crub, loftily. "You are now placed under my care. You are to remember that my word is law. Disobedience will only——"

But Abner, redder than before, doubled his fists closer, and stamped defiance amidst his screams.

Mr. Crub's speech was nipped in the bud. Not a tone of his voice was audible amidst the din; and in a moment more Abner had brought the scene to a conclusion by flying ferociously at Mr. Crub, and pounding him with all the vigor his little frame possessed, yelling all the while:

"You nasty, nasty man, let me go to my ma! I won't stay in your school. I won't—I won't—I won't—if I kill you to get out!"

CHAPTER VII.

ABNER IS CONQUERED.

For a moment Mr. Crub stood quite motionless. He had never had any experience in such a case as this, and hardly knew what to do. The next, he had pinioned Master Abner's tiny wrists in both his hands, and held him powerless, to that young gentleman's immense surprise.

Both found themselves in entirely new positions and momentary calm and silence was the consequence. Abner broke it.

"Let me go," he said. "Come, you let me go. I *won't* be held! I *won't* stay here, and I *won't* mind you. *You* aint my grandmother."

"No, no, my little man. You will find I am a very different person," said Mr. Crub. "You will find no weak submission to your caprices here. You will learn that your duty is to obey. Sit down and listen to me. You are entirely under my authority. I have the right to do just what I choose with you, and I *will conquer you*. Beg my pardon at once for your insolence. If you had been here longer I would flog you within an inch of your life, and expel you; but this is scarcely as much your fault as that of others. You have never been properly disciplined. Beg my pardon at once, sir, and I will then undertake to teach you to be a better boy."

"Does expell mean turn out?" asked Abner.

"It does," said Mr. Crub.

"You can't do that, because I won't stay," said Abner. "And I never will beg your pardon. The very minute you let go of me I will beat you to death."

"The little savage," said Mrs Crub.

"Take your hands away from me, Abner," said Mr. Crub, holding the tiny wrists in a strong grip. "Try your very best, do it."

Abner struggled, of course quite in vain. His adopted mother and her old servant woman had, now and then, essayed to prevent him from working "his own sweet will," and he had overpowered them.

He expected Mr. Crub's hands to unclose as theirs did; but, instead, they seemed to be made of iron and welded about his own.

He struggled more fiercely. He grew scarlet with exertion. His breath came short. His teeth were set. Still he produced no effect on the vice-like clutch of the schoolmaster's hand. Great tears rolled down Abner's cheeks—tears of rage. From being red he turned deadly white. His eyes glittered. His last wild struggle gave Mr. Crub more trouble than he had fancied it could; but still the grasp about the wrists was unbroken, and in utter despair Abner stood quite still. Then Mr. Crub spoke:

"You see how I hold your hands, just so; because I am a man, you a little boy; I a teacher, you a scholar. I hold *you*. For three months, at least, you must do as I bid you, go where I bid you, and stay where I bid you. You have been used to having your own way. Now you must obey others. Make up your mind to *that*. You will have to, just as you had to make up your mind to having your wrists held just now. What *you* like is of no importance any longer. You will be told what is for your good and made to do it. In time you will be very thankful for that which makes you so angry now. You may take your hands away and sit upon that little stool, Abner Gault, and listen to me."

He unclasped his fingers as he spoke; but Abner, instead of sitting down to listen, only availed himself of the release to dash past Mr. Crub, overturning Mrs. Crub's work-box, and making straight for the door, to fly thence to the hall, and the hall door being open at that moment to admit a pupil who had been at home for a day or two on account of illness, through that into the street, and down the street at full speed, breathless, and utterly ignorant of the road that he should take, or, perhaps, of the fact that there was any road whatever, in his one desire to escape from that man who had held his wrists in an iron grip and had told him that *so* he would hold him body and soul.

Passengers turned and stared. Men in vehicles yelled as the distracted child rushed under the very hoofs of the horses, escaping only by a dozen miracles with life and limb.

And Mr. Crub stood at the door and looked out. It would never do, he knew, for the master of a "school for young gentlemen" to be seen pursuing a flying scholar down that genteel street, and he turned to the man who had opened the door with a waive of the hand in the direction Abner had taken.

"Tomkins, run after that young gentleman and bring him back," he said, and walked into the parlor.

Tomkins stared aghast.

"I ha'n't run this thirty year," he said. "I couldn't catch him if I was to have warnin' for not doin' it. If you'd only be so obleegin', Master Perry. You're a master hand to cut it, I know. Do, Master Perry. Your bones is a heap younger'n mine."

And the newly-returned boy, nothing loth, replied to this adjuration by setting off up the street in pursuit of Abner Gault.

He was a good runner, but he had one who was light of foot as any hare to outstrip. A creature, too, who, in its ignorance, fancied itself flying from a place of torture and oppression, and it was ten minutes before he overtook him.

When Abner felt two great hands seize his little blue jacket collar, he made an effort to escape by slipping out of that article of apparei and leaving it in the hands of his pursuer. But Master Perry was too wide awake for that. Learned in the tricks of boys, he secured his prisoner by a firmer grip, and then said, in the peculiar growl common to lads of his age:

"You *are* plucky for such a little chap. But you can't get away now. What ails you? Who are you afraid of?"

"I aint afraid of anybody," said Abner; "but I *won't* stay in school, and I *will* go home."

"Who fetched you?" asked Master Perry.

"*She* did. Ma—not my own mother, but all the same," said Abner. "Perhaps he made her go without me."

"Old Crub, d'ye mean?" asked Master Perry.

"The teacher," said Abner.

"No. He's up to a good deal; but he couldn't quite do that to a parent, you know," said Master Perry. "She means you to stay; so you'll have to, you know."

"I *won't*," said Abner.

"There's one. It's dinner-time," said Master Perry. "Look here, don't you like dinner? We've got mutton, I know, and it's rice-pudding day."

But Abner was not in a mood to think of puddings, if, indeed, looking upon the school as a prisoner might upon his cell, he could fancy any food tasting well there. He tried his little strength again, and Master Perry felt a furious blow just above his waist band, and another on his wrist, and was obliged to hold his captive a little tighter.

He was a mild, overgrown, very good-natured boy, so he only laughed at the attack, but he was hungry and knew that the gong at the academy was sounding and that, if he wanted his dinner, it was time to hurry back.

"Are you coming now," he said, bending down. "Come, you don't know the way home, any how. It aint bad when you're used to it,—not so very; and some fellow will always tell you and do your sums; and then there are holidays—come along!"

"Never, as long as I live," said Abner.

Perry laughed. He had small brothers of his own, who were his pets, and Abner looked a little like one of them. He would have preferred persuasion greatly, but still he did not find himself able to forget that, at that very moment, the boys were filing down stairs to their dinner. He could not waste those precious moments and lose his repast, so he quietly picked Abner up in his long arms, and, shouldering him as though he were a baby, walked back to the school with him and dumped him, as though he had been coal or potatoes, in the hall.

Then he ran down to dinner. He was just in time.

Mr. Crub had arisen to say grace; but, before he commenced, he turned toward the new-comer.

"Well, Perry?" he asked.

"He's in the hall, sir. *I* never saw such a fellow. I expect my face is black and blue; he pounded me all the way," said Perry.

Mr. Crub turned to the man-servant:

"Lock the young gentleman up in the chamber of correction," he said.

And proceeded with the grace, as though nothing had occurred, while Tomkins toddled out to obey orders.

Abner was lying flat on the hall floor, his whole figure expressive of complete despair. Hitherto, a little emperor, a veritable despot, in his own small world; he found himself a slave. Giants held his wrists and carried him bodily away. He had been accustomed to fat little Mrs. Gault's, "Oh, please don't, Aby," and to Betsy's, "There now, I wouldn't, Abner," and now he was taken hold of and forced to obey.

He was not subdued, but he was, for the time, quite worn out and helpless. He could not resist now, every little nerve had been strung to its utmost. He had fought until his arms were powerless; screamed until he had lost all voice; run until he could not have taken another step; and old Tomkins picked him up and carried him to the awful "Chamber of Correction" without an effort.

"Now see what's come of all of them capers," said old Tomkins, as he deposited him on a bench in the corner. "If you'd been good, you'd a-been havin' dinner; now you take my advice and beg parding of master, else you'll get a wollopping. He's a rare hand to wollop, and he likes to do it, it's my opinion, so you be careful."

But Abner did not answer. He had flung himself down with his face on the ground, just as he had been lying in the hall. And old Tomkins walked out of the room, and closed the door after him.

The scholars ate their dinners, and went back to their classes. The hum of school duties recommenced. Mrs. Crub dressed herself, and went out to pay calls, and old Tomkins took his afternoon nap on a kitchen chair. Every one seemed to have forgotten poor Abner; and there he lay on the floor, face downwards, in his prison, wondering what would come next; until, late in the afternoon, Mr. Crub opened the door and came in.

He had conquered Abner. He saw that, the moment he met the boy's eye; and, considering his former conduct, wonderful, mercy was awarded to the boy. He had a few slight touches of the ferule on both hands, was ordered to "beg pardon," begged it, was forgiven, lectured, and taken down to tea, where the boys who had heard of the astonishing freaks of the new scholar, had their curiosity gratified at last by a sight of him.

But, though Abner was conquered, he did not take the matter quietly. His humiliation was intense—that of a despot suddenly overthrown—and he hated the victors heartily. For a week or so, Mr. Crub had much-a-do to manage him, but in the end finding association with other boys not unpleasant, and being naturally bright and ambitious, he began to desire the honors and triumphs of the little world, and to study his lessons as only bright boys can study them. He learned to read, he learned to cipher. He progressed in the most astonishing manner. He would be head of his class whatever that class was, and became the pattern boy of the school, as far as attainments went. But his desire to have his own way got him into many a pickle in the play-ground, and many a conflict, ending in black eyes and swollen noses that same propensity brought about. From first to last there was no forgetting Master Abner. He was either entitled to a medal or a flogging. Either a credit to the school or a disgrace to it, every moment of his life.

But Mrs. Gault was wondrously fond of him. In a year's time some changes had occurred at "The Washington." A rival hotel had been started, hard by, and Betsy, the old servant, had departed this life. So Mrs. Gault had retired from business, leased her property, and come down to New York to live where she could be near Abner's school and have him at home regularly every Saturday.

She hired three pretty rooms on a second floor, and put her best furniture into them, and kept house alone. She had few friends in New York and felt oddly enough amongst brick and mortar, but to be near Abner was all. For him she worked and thought and saved. All her money was out at interest for him, for she intended to make her will in his favor, and she thought him her greatest blessing. Certainly he was very fond of her. He loved to go home on Saturday evening. To show her his prizes and to exhibit his acquirements. To be, as he always was, with her, the greatest wonder in the world. She was all the mother he had ever known, and if boys are ever grateful he may have been said to be grateful to her. She, at least, could not find a fault in him.

When, once a quarter, she went down to her old home to collect her rent, she boasted proudly of Aby's proficiency. When he began to learn drawing she always took his copies in her bag with her, and his certificates were framed and glazed and hung up in her bedroom.

She was not very old yet, and she confidently hoped to live to see her boy a man. A very great, good man. A minister of the Gospel she would have liked best to see him, but, if not that, a doctor. That, in Mrs. Gault's opinion, was next best and genteel. And then, when he had a fine house and a pretty wife, she would break up her own small housekeeping and live with him, and pet his children as she had petted him. So she would plan and so chatter, her nice old face aglow with happiness, and Abner would listen to the castle-buildings with a vague idea that it would be very nice. He did not care much for the far-off future, but he liked the petting, and the holiday keeping, and the good home-made treats of cake and pie and pudding, and he liked to be made a wonder of, and to be praised and, above all, to have his own way, which he already had with Mrs. Gault.

So those Saturdays and the Sundays, when they went to church together, were the happiest of the week to Mrs. Gault and her adopted son.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE BACHELOR'S MISTAKE.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

Squire Popham was short and stout, with a shining bald head, and a nose inclined to be *retroussée*—which we take to be the French for *pug*. All heroes can't be tall, Greek-featured, and named Montmorenci; and our hero was moulded after an exceedingly every-day sort of pattern; nevertheless, there was no inconsiderable spark of romance in his soul.

Forty-five years had the Squire dwelt, mateless and forlorn, in the world; and now, as he entered upon the forty-sixth, it struck him that he was following up a wrong theory. Some people wake to the great mystery of their lives through the glance of a soft eye, a beam of moonlight, a half-open rose-bud, a bit of ribbon. 'Squire Popham was aroused through the instrumentality of a toothache!

"It's all very well for a man to be an old bachelor as long as he's well and sound," grumbled the Squire, dolefully regarding the cold mustard-draughts and clammy hop-plasters that his landlady had sent up after innumerable delays and excuses, "but when you begin to get achy and shaky, a married man has the best of it. *I'll* be a married man! Ugh! how cold these confounded puddings are! why couldn't she have warmed 'em a little? Now the tooth begins to jump—why the deuce aint I a married man, with a little soft, peachy cheek to lay mine against, and hands that know how to hold a hop-plaster without losing three-quarters out of the other end, right on to a fellow's black velvet vest. I'll go to some watering-place or other and get married, as soon as this swelling goes down—I will, as sure as my name is Paul Popham!"

And that was the way our Squire came to contemplate matrimony.

The "Sea-weed" hotel was crowded full, that season, with old girls, young girls, and middle-aged girls, widows, matrons, and old maids; in fact, the very multiplicity of the article puzzled 'Squire Popham in making his selection.

"For I can't marry 'em all," argued the Squire; "and what between waltzing, and croquet, and the German, they don't any of 'em stand still long enough for me to make up my mind. Perpetual motion, indeed! it's nothing to a live woman!"

Now the Sea-weed hotel was a huge brick building, with a colossal wing extending out at right angles and enclosing a sort of court; and the window of Mr. Popham's room, the last in the main building, looked directly into those of Mrs. Martin, who occupied the first adjoining, in the wing. So that, if there is such a thing as having your next door neighbor opposite to you, 'Squire Popham and Mrs. Martin enjoyed that paradoxical felicity.

Mrs. Martin was a widow—a plump, rosy widow, with red cheeks, and pearly teeth, and big blue eyes, full of wicked glances—a widow who liked a joke and had, at the same time, an exquisite appreciation for a bit of whispered sentiment. And one day the business was finished for 'Squire Popham by the deft way in which the charming widow mixed some salad dressing at the dinner-table.

"I like that widow," thought the Squire, holding his knife and fork admiringly in mid air as he watched the skilful operation. "I'll marry that widow—if she'll let me."

So that evening the Squire sat at his window with the newspaper for a flimsy excuse, and looked unutterable things at the widow, who, pretending to be entirely unconscious, hemmed away at her dainty frills, or read small volumes in red and gold, sending now and then an electric ray of her blue eyes to keep up the flames in the Squire's heart.

"I think I'm in love," said the Squire to himself. "I *must* be in love? I never saw such blue eyes in my life; and as for lobster salad, they couldn't get it up better at Delmonico's. Then again a widow has had experience—she's not like one of those girls who know nothing but the waltz and a pack of Italian songs. I dare say she could make a delightful mustard plaster; and as for water-gruel and milk punch, I see 'em in her eyes! Yes, I'm undoubtedly in love."

The moon—a full harvest shield of mellow silver—rose. The Squire still smoked his cigar and ruminated on the delicious possibilities in store for him, until the widow Martin's kerosene lamp glowed into brightness on the table. Through the deceitful screen of the fluttering muslin curtain he could see her moving to and fro, like the fair vision of a dream!

"I wish I was a good hand at poetry," soliloquized the Squire. "I know I could get in something about a star behind a cloud. Crowd—proud—loud—hang it, they don't hitch at all. 'Star behind the midnight cloud;' but it *isn't* midnight. Shroud—shroud—might as well say skeleton at once and done with it. Vowed—how could a fellow lug in vowed? 'Star behind a midnight cloud, to worship thee I have vowed'—somehow that seems to go limpety-catch. Shades of the Nine Muses! I hadn't any idea poetry put one into such a perspiration. I think perhaps I wasn't intended for a poet; but that idea of the star behind a cloud *was* a pretty one, if I could only have hit upon a rhyme that didn't hobble on three legs! Hallo! hallo! what's that she has in her arms?"

For through the floating muslin drapery which the Squire's fancy had invested with the poetic fullness of a cloud, he could see the bewitching little widow pacing up and down the floor, her brown ringlets drooping above her face, and her dulcet tones murmuring some sweet lullaby.

"Upon—my—word!" ejaculated the puzzled Squire. "It isn't her second husband—unless he's a smaller man than the average; it must be—a baby! Deceitful enchantress, false as fair! does she intend to pass herself off as possessing no incumbrance? Does she mean to keep the existence of her child a secret? Good Cupid, how fortunate I am to have penetrated her treachery before—before the fatal word was spoken! Fancy me, Paul Popham, married to a woman with a baby! I'd rather live on cold mustard-plasters and stewed hops for the rest of my life! Hush-sh-sh! it is asleep now! what's that she is calling it? 'Her precious darling, sweetest pet!' Aha! little does she know who listens to her honeyed accents! Now she's putting it in its crib—a deuced unhealthy place to keep a child, that unventilated closet; but I suppose it would be discovered anywhere else. She must dose it with Daffy's Elixir and Soothing Syrup all day, and it comes out, like a bat, at night! Heavens; what cold-blooded heartlessness! Now she has gone out with a pitcher in her hand—the opportunity is here! I'll investigate this thing, or my name isn't Paul Popham! Ah, Melissa Martin! who could have dreamed this of thee?"

Squire Popham waited until the rustle of the widow's half-mourning muslins had died away in the hall, and then crept softly across the threshold of his own apartment, entering hers, with noiseless slippered tread.

The light burned with soft, steady flame on the table; the dainty, half-hemmed frilling lay beside it, with a tiny pink Bohemian vase, in which Squire Popham recognized a bouquet of white roses he had that afternoon presented with a pretty speech to the widow. And close beside the big arm-chair lay a pair of tiny slippers, rosetted and buckled, and a white cambric *peignoir* enough to melt the heart of any bachelor into whose nature suspicion had not entered with its poisoned dart.

But Paul Popham, being forewarned, was consequently forearmed. He paused not to linger round the bewitching insignia of the female presence, but stole on tiptoe, with hushed breath and lips apart, to the closet, where lay *perdu* the secret of the widow Martin's inner life.

Well, there were dresses, and shawls, and round hats with saucy birds' wings in them, and crinolines, and snowy rustling skirts, and even a twin pair of India-rubber boots hanging on a peg—but no crib.

"Is there a trap-door through which the—the baby has vanished?" the Squire asked himself, staring vaguely about the closet. "Hallo! there comes the widow's crinoline down on my head! and by all the powers, I've kicked over a saucer of milk! A queer way she has of provisioning her garrison, and——"

The Squire uttered a short, sharp ejaculation: in groping round the floor to replace the overturned saucer, his hand came in contact with something warm and soft—something decidedly *alive!*

"It's the baby, by Jove!" he exclaimed, making a rush at it, but the next instant a short, shrill bark and the agonizing sensation of sharp teeth closing together over his epidermis dispelled the brief dream of triumph, and a plump little poodle, abandoding the invaded fastness of its basket, rushed past him out of the room and down the stairs, howling at the top of its voice.

"Only a puppy-dog!" reflected the discomfited Squire, rubbing his wounded hand; "but it is just the season for hydrophobia, and there's no knowing what may happen. Serves me right for not attending to my own business. But I'm glad it wasn't a baby, and that Melissa isn't a Syren after all. I'll propose to that widow to-morrow morning—if I'm not running on all fours and barking with the hydrophobia!"

As Squire Popham formed this mental resolution he was struggling to free himself from the bondage of Mrs. Martin's crinoline, which clung with almost human malice to his manly form. At the same moment the sound of footsteps reached his ear.

"She's coming back, as sure as my name is Paul Popham, she's coming back!" gasped our hero, struggling more wildly than ever, "and here I am in her closet like a caged bear!"

He shuffled half way across the room with the crinoline clinging round his ankles; but it was too late—Mrs. Martin was almost on the threshold, and he staggered back, just regaining the friendly shelter of the closet as she entered with the villainous little poodle in her arms, and a young lady following her.

"Come in, Laura," chirped the widow, and then buried her plump cheeks in the dog's woolly hair. "Poor 'ittle Petsy, did it get f'ightened and run away? Never mind, its own, own mistress has come back, so she has. There, lie still on the cushion, like a darling Mouseykins as it was, and be good. Here are the poems, Laura," she added, changing her tone.

"O, thank you," said Miss Vernon, whose voice Popham recognized from his stifling retreat. "By the way, Melissa, what has become of your fat adorer? I haven't seen him on the piazza to-night."

"Do you mean the bald-headed old bachelor? I'm sure I don't know, nor care."

Squire Popham broke into a chill perspiration, notwithstanding the fever heat of his hiding-place. "Fat adorer!" "Bald-headed old bachelor!" It was enough to set any man's blood circulating to hear himself miscalled in that ridiculous manner.

"The idea of his presuming to admire *you*, Melissa!" laughed Miss Vernon. "Do contrive to secrete me somewhere when he makes his declaration—it will be such fun. How Harry will laugh when he hears of it. By the way, have you written to Harry to-night?"

"Harry, indeed!" gasped Squire Poham. "No, I don't think he *will* laugh—not if I know it." Here the bachelor changed his cramped position and two or three pairs of gaiters rattled about his ears, down on the floor.

"Mercy upon us! what's that?" shrieked the widow.

"It's Popsey," soothed Miss Vernon.

"No indeed, it's not Popsey, for he's here on his cushion."

"Then it's a ghost!" screamed Laura.

"It's a burglar!" shrieked Mrs. Martin, and Popsey added to the tumult by barking furiously at the closet door.

"Help! Murder! Help! Thieves! Help!" shouted Laura, at the top of her voice, while the widow clung round her neck cachinnating hysterically.

"Ladies, allow me to explain," began Squire Popham, opening the door three-quarters of an inch, whereupon Popsey redoubled his barks and the widow screamed louder than ever.

"Villain! stand back!" commanded Laura, dragging two rocking-chairs and an embroidered footstool in front of the door. "Oh, thank goodness, here is help at last. There, there!" she waved her hand tragically toward the closet door, "the band of desperadoes is secreted there!"

The gentlemen boarders gathered round with all the pokers, tongs, pistols, croquet-mallets and rulers they had been able to collect at such short notice—the ladies stood back, shrieking in chorus.

"I'll open the door, Jenks," said the landlord to the head waiter, "and you be ready to collar the first one that rushes out. One—two—three—and here goes!"

But to the surprise—and, to confess the truth, disappointment—of the assembled boarders, nobody appeared save Squire Popham, in a flowered dressing-gown and a very red face, shrinking back among the widow's silk dresses.

"Why, bless my soul!" exclaimed the landlord, "it's Mr. Popham! How came you here, sir?"

"It's—it's a mistake," stuttered the miserable bachelor, creeping out with sheepish countenance.

"It's a confoundedly queer-looking mistake," muttered two or three of the more belligerently inclined boarders. But mine host good-naturedly interfered in Mr. Popham's behalf.

"I am quite sure Mr. Popham is no burglar," he said. "Mrs. Martin, you'll bear witness to it's being a mistake, I am sure."

And Mrs. Martin, with "Popsey" still barking irrepressibly in her arms, declared that "she was *so* sorry such a misunderstanding had taken place."

"And *I* am sorry too, madam," said the old bachelor, stiffly bowing as he marched out between the lines of silent and amazed spectators.

"My dear," whispered Laura Vernon, "you may depend he has heard every word we said!"

"But how on earth do you suppose he came there?"

"I am sure I haven't the least idea," said the puzzled young lady.

Nor did they ever discover a clue to the mystery. Squire Popham resolutely kept at bay the curiosity of the whole hotel by obstinately reiterating his first statement, "that it was a mistake," and nothing more. And the next morning he packed his valise and left the Sea Weed House.

We are sorry to record the fact that he is an old bachelor still, and likely to remain so, his first adventure in the service of the little god having proved so disastrous that he will never pluck up courage to hazard another! Perhaps Leap Year may do something for him; but it is a forlorn hope, at best!

THE EVIL GENIUS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF "THE WHITE TERROR," "WARNING VOICE," "THE FATAL ERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LII.

The tragedy that had occurred at Silvermere was not made known to Mrs. Langley till the next morning.

When Denham came home he found a cold supper set out for him in his own room, as was the custom of the house when he remained out late at night, but he had no appetite for it now.

He knew that his guards would be unwilling to lose sight of him, so he gave them up his bed, and sat moodily by the fire thinking over the events of the night, and wondering what the result of the morrow's examination would be to himself.

It was a bitter humiliation to be arraigned as the murderer of any man; doubly bitter when that man had been the successful rival who, in his heart, he had wished dead and out of his path. Many times had he been tempted to defy Fenton to mortal combat, but never could he have looked forward to the hour in which he would be forced to stand forth to the gaze of the world and hear himself accused of assassinating in this cowardly manner the man with whom he had been reared.

Though freed by the event of this night, Opal was severed from him as completely as if by death, unless the real criminal could be discovered and convicted of the crime. Denham knew that public opinion would accuse him still, let the award of justice be what it would, unless he could bring its real perpetrator forward, and he writhed beneath the impossibility of thus justifying himself.

When he tried to think who could have taken Fenton's life, he plunged into a sea of darkness that afforded no clue, and at last, exhausted by all he had gone through in the previous twelve hours, he sunk into a feverish slumber in the large chair in which he sat.

Denham was aroused by the entrance of a servant with wood to replenish the fire, and on opening his eyes he saw that dawn was breaking in rosy splendor over the horizon.

With his first waking consciousness came back all the horror of his position, and for a few moments he quailed before what he must undergo that day.

Guy Denham was a proud, reticent and shrinking man, and nothing could have been more repulsive to him than the thought that he was to be brought before a criminal tribunal to be examined on the charge of secretly assassinating his rival on the night of his marriage. He shuddered at the thought that his long-cherished love for Opal must become the common gossip of the day, adding another link to the chain of circumstantial evidence against him.

He aroused himself from his bitter thoughts and remembered that he had yet to inform his sister of the terrible position in which he found himself placed, and to impose on her the painful task of revealing to Inez the fate of her faithless lover.

Denham turned toward the bed and saw that young Wallis was attentively regarding him. After the servant went out and closed the door behind him, with some effort he said:

"Edward Wallis, you have known me from boyhood, yet you acted last night as if you believe me guilty of the foul deed from which my inmost soul recoils. Why should *you* have proclaimed me the murderer of Godfrey and set others on the track of an innocent man? Have our past relations given you any warrant for supposing me the wretch I should be if I had done this thing?"

In some embarrassment Wallis replied:

"Hitherto I have known nothing of you, Denham, that was not honorable; but knowing what I do of the late differences between you and Fenton, what could I do, when I held your own pistol in my hand, but recently discharged, but denounce you as his assassin?"

"What do you know that gave edge to your suspicions?" asked Denham, sternly.

"Only this—that you and Godfrey have not been on good terms for some time past. That sharp words have passed between you; and I am also aware that you have long been as much in love with Opal Hastings as a man can be with any girl. Can you blame me for believing you guilty? But I admit that what afterwards passed in Mr. Hastings' house put a different face on the affair. Circumstances point to you as the criminal, but I am willing to mistrust them; to give you the benefit of the doubt that has arisen in my own mind."

"It is well that you will do me that much justice," Guy gloomily replied. "There is nothing left for me now but to face this accusation as bravely as I may, and repel it by every means left open to me. But if it were not from the cowardly fear that I may be believed guilty of the crime, if I did myself any injury, I believe I would sooner shoot myself than undergo the ordeal that is before me to-day. I warn you, Wallis, that if Opal Hastings' name is brought forward in any way during my examination, I will hold him who does it strictly accountable to me, and I will avail myself of my first moment of freedom to exact such atonement as one gentleman may demand of another."

Wallis hastened to say:

"I am sure that you need apprehend nothing on that score. Poor Opal is sacred; she will suffer enough, without knowing that your passion for herself throws an additional cloud of suspicion around you. Denham, I loved Godfrey as a brother, and I have long cherished the hope that I should one day claim him as such. I regret deeply that I directed suspicion toward you in the first moment of excitement; sorry on your account, and on that of those two young girls who are so nearly related to you. If I had only had time to think a moment, I should have acted differently."

"On their account alone, I presume," said Denham, with slightly bitter emphasis. "I accept of no immunity on the score of my family. I shall stand or fail according to my own worth. If the record of my life weighs nothing in my favor, so be it. No act of mine has ever yet brought the blush of shame to the cheek of any one allied to me, and this false accusation cannot forever remain as a blighting stain upon an innocent man. God is too just to permit that."

"I am sure he is, and I now believe that you had nothing to do with the event of last night, old fellow, in spite of appearances," said Wallis, warmly. "I acted like a mad fool myself, and I saw it plainly when your aunt stood up over the dead body of her son and spoke in your defence as nobly as she did. I shall go with you to town, Denham, but not as your accuser."

"There will be enough to play that part without you," was the sorrowful response. "You are not afraid to lose sight of me a few moments, I hope? I wish to see my sister alone and give her my own account of this painful affair. You can keep guard at the door of her room if you are afraid that I shall attempt to escape."

"I have no fear of that. Your best chance is to face the charge boldly. I think it will be only a magistrate's trial, for they will scarcely find sufficient cause to indict you before a grand jury. You know that we are not as strict in these affairs as some other people are."

Denham sighed wearily as he arose, and said:

"So much the better for me, I suppose, for I know that I am in a sad strait. I will go to Anna at once, and tell her as gently as I can what must soon become known to her. Breakfast will be served at eight, and, after it is over, I shall be ready to accompany you to Natchez."

He left the room, and crossing the hall, tapped at Mrs. Langley's door. She was an early riser, and he found her already dressed. She turned to him as he entered, and eagerly said:

"I knew your knock, Guy, and I cannot tell you how glad I was to hear it. I have been more uneasy about you than I can express. Why on earth did you ride away in that wild fashion last night, leaving me to all sorts of dreadful fancies? I did not fall asleep till you come in, and this morning Betty told me that some of the wedding-guests had come home with you. Did you change your mind and go to Silvermere, after all?"

Denham gravely replied:

"Yes, Anna, I was at Silvermere. I was taken there under such painful circumstances as you could never imagine. Have you had no intimation of the tragedy that occurred there last night? No, I see by your face that you have not, and it becomes my painful duty to inform you that Godfrey was shot at as he was walking in the shrubbery, and——"

Pale as death and shivering with dread, Mrs. Langley interrupted him with a sharp cry.

"Shot at! Killed, do you mean? And by whose hand, Guy? By whose hand? Oh, Father in heaven, that I should live to doubt you!"

Denham became even paler than herself, and he mournfully said:

"It is as I feared it would be. My own sister suspects me, then how can I blame others for attempting to fasten this crime upon me. Look at me, Anna. This hand is pure from the stain of the blood that has been shed; I swear it before the Searcher of all hearts, and He will yet make my innocence manifest, I firmly believe. Though my pistol was used by the assassin, I have no more idea who he was than a babe an hour old. I never told a falsehood in my life, and, in this most solemn and trying moment, I swear to you by the memory of our mother that I am speaking but the simple truth."

Mrs. Langley believed him now. She threw herself, sobbing, upon his breast, and said:

"Forgive me, forgive me for doubting you, my brother. I believe you innocent. I *will* believe it, though all the world should accuse you. But how did you come to be near the house? If they had not found you there, you would never have been suspected."

"My own madness carried me away. I tried to exhaust the fever in my blood by swift riding, but as the hours went on and I knew that Opal was given to another, a wild desire seized me to look on her once more. I resolved, at all hazards, to gratify it, and I entered the grounds of Silvermere, secured my horse near the boat-house, and made my way toward the house. The portico was deserted, and I approached one of the windows over which the curtain had not been drawn.

"I saw her, looking like a white angel, in her bridal robes, but I thought she seemed weary and heart-sick. I prayed for her happiness then, Nina, I surrendered her to the husband who had won her from me, and took what I believed to be my last farewell of her; for I did not intend ever to look on her again as Godfrey Fenton's wife.

"I heard them coming out from supper, and I went down the steps before any one detected my presence there. I found my horse, and rode very slowly toward home; for, by this time, the poor animal was nearly broken down with the mad speed at which he had been ridden. Just as I reached the entrance to Ashwood, I was overtaken by an excited party from Silvermere, who accused me of having shot Godfrey."

"And he—*he*—is he—is he——"

Mrs. Langley could not speak the last word. Denham bowed his head, and slowly went on:

"I returned with them at once, to find Godfrey quite dead, and to hear myself accused on all sides as his assassin. But Aunt Gertrude would not believe it, and she spoke nobly in my defence,—for which I shall always thank her. The *guests* who came home with me came as my guards, and I must accompany them to Natchez this morning, to undergo an examination before a magistrate; perhaps to be committed to prison to await my trial for murder."

Mrs. Langley sat down quite overcome by this announcement. She faintly asked:

"Is there no way of escaping such an ordeal as that? Dear Guy, can you not leave home till this dreadful affair has blown over? till steps have been taken to discover the real murderer? They may put you on trial for your life; may punish you for a crime I was myself mad enough to think for a moment that you might have committed. If *I* thought thus, will others be more lenient in their judgments? Make your escape, Guy, while it is yet in your power to do so, and leave me to defend your cause in your absence."

With mournful tenderness, Denham replied:

"That is impossible, Anna. I should be sought for immediately, seized on, and brought back again. My flight would add much weight to the evidence against me, and I had rather bear the ignominy of a trial than fly from my home as a banned murderer, to become a wanderer on the face of the earth. Oh, my sister, prove yourself strong in this dreadful hour and tempt me to do nothing that can more deeply compromise me! I believe that the evidence against me, strong as it is, will not suffice to condemn me; especially as both my aunt and Mr. Hastings have strongly expressed their belief in my innocence."

"Did Aunt Gertrude really refuse to believe the accusation?" she breathlessly asked.

"Yes; I must do her the justice to say that she atoned for all her wrongs to me by the noble confidence she expressed in my inability to have committed such a crime as this. She stood up over the dead body of her son, and uttered such words as have bound me to her for life. If I am permitted to do so, I will take the place of him that is gone, and be to her all that he would have been."

Mrs. Langley shook her head drearily.

"It was grand and noble in her to speak in your behalf in such an hour of anguish; but no one can be to her what Godfrey was. She loved him far more dearly than she did her younger children, and she will long be inconsolable for his loss. I will not again urge you to escape, though it is dreadful to think that so honorable and high-toned a man as you are should be implicated in so dire a tragedy as this—should even be accused of having committed the deed yourself. Darling brother, what can I do to aid you? Shall I go with you to Natchez, and help to sustain you before your judges by my presence?"

"That would be subjecting you to too painful an ordeal. I shall have many friends near me, and you have something to do here. That poor girl must be told of what has happened, and you alone can approach her with such tidings."

Mrs. Langley covered her face with her hands, and her frame shook with strong emotion. Her brother waited till she was more composed, and then said:

"You must appear at breakfast, Anna, and wear a calm and assured face before those who are here to see that I am safely conveyed to town. I trust that I shall soon return to you freed from the worst fear that presses on my heart. If I am permitted to have my freedom, I can set such investigations on foot as may lead to the discovery of the assassin. Till that is done, I shall ever feel as if the stain of this accusation is clinging to me."

"I will do my best to be brave and firm, Guy; but it will be a dreadful effort in the present state of my feelings. Who came with you as your guards?"

"Edward Wallis and John Talbot. They were both friendly to me in our boyish days, and I think they are inclined to accept Mr. Hastings' view of what has happened, and exonerate me from the charge of destroying Godfrey. God knows that, eagerly as I have desired to find some cause of quarrel with him that would have brought us face to face in honorable combat without implicating the name of Opal, I never once thought of doing so dastardly a thing as taking his life in this secret way. I could never have aimed a deadly blow at the heart of an unarmed man?"

"What led others to suppose that you could do such a thing?"

"Do you remember the pistol I loaned Opal last fall when we had target-shooting at Silvermere? I neglected to reclaim it, and that was used by the assassin. It was picked up on the lawn within a few feet of Godfrey's body; was recognized as mine; and when I was found a few moments later, riding toward home, no doubt was left in the minds of my pursuers that I was the criminal."

A sudden light flashed over Mrs. Langley's face, and in an excited tone she said:

"I believe that I have found a clue to the murderer. That girl against whom I warned Godfrey in vain boasted to me that she could hit a mark at thirty paces distant. *She* has possessed herself of your pistol and done this deed. What did Miss Gordon say? How did she look when poor Godfrey was brought in?"

Denham gravely replied:

"Have you not yet heard that Miss Gordon left Silvermere on Monday to return North? She embarked on a New Orleans steamer, and must have been far on her way before the hour of the marriage arrived. No, hers could not have been the hand that committed the deed of which I am accused."

"But, Guy, listen to me. The packet was not due till Thursday evening; and last night it lay at the landing only a mile from Silvermere till one o'clock. I know this, because my overseer shipped a hundred bales of cotton on her, and there was a large quantity from other plantations to be taken on board. Follow up that girl, Guy, and you will clear yourself from this atrocious charge by finding the true criminal. I feel the conviction in my own mind that it is so."

"My dear Anna, I cannot agree with you, but I will promise to do as you wish when I am free to act for myself. But it will be useless. No young girl could leave a steamer in the night without a protector, and make her way through a dense woodland alone on such an errand as that. She would never have the nerve to do it."

"Few women could do it, I grant; but there are exceptions, and Nina Gordon is one of them. I saw the tiger spirit aroused in her last summer when she was disappointed in her dreams of fortune, and I believe she could do even this. I wish most sincerely that I had made no effort to expose her to Mrs. Hawks. The money would have been hers, and she might never have crossed our path again. It has done poor Inez little service, now that she has gained it."

"All that is gone past recall, Anna. You thought you were doing right when you attempted to serve my interests by ruining Miss Gordon's, so don't grieve over it, dear. I will think over your suggestion, and, as soon as possible, take measures to assure myself if there is any foundation for it. Till I am convinced of her guilt beyond a doubt, it would be most cruel to direct suspicion toward a young and friendless stranger."

"You always think of others before yourself, Guy. But if Nina Gordon has done what I suspect, she deserves no mercy at our hands. She has avenged herself on me for unmasking her last summer, by taking your pistol, that I might be made wretched by having you implicated in this fearful charge. The longer I think about it, the deeper becomes the conviction that I have found the real criminal."

"My dear sister, I would far sooner suffer this injustice myself than become the medium of bringing such a charge against a helpless girl, unless it were better sustained than by mere suspicion. It is beneath my manhood to screen myself by accusing Miss Gordon. No; I must wait until I can find some tangible evidence against her, or I can never breathe her name in connexion with this sad affair."

"But how are you to obtain that evidence, unless you take measures at once to follow her up through every moment of time from the day she left Silvermere till the steamer left the landing below here?"

"I will do that much, I pledge you my word, Anna. I will set a detective on her track who will be silent as death, and keen enough to find out all I wish to know. But really I do not think that we shall be rewarded by the discovery of anything to criminate Miss Gordon. She left Silvermere at her own earnest request, and she is too ignorant of the localities on the river to know when the steamer landed near her late home. There was no moon last night, and I cannot believe that any girl would have the nerve to walk a mile in the night through a thick forest, that she might take a human life when she reached the end of her pilgrimage. It is impossible."

"Impossible or not, *it was done*, Guy, and you will yet learn that I am right. I can do nothing now but pray to God to bring the truth to light, and to shield you from the harm that threatens you while this cloud hangs over you."

"Don't give way to fancies, my dear sister, and persuade yourself that things will go badly with me. Aside from the humiliation of being examined on such a charge, I have little to dread. Those who will sit in judgment upon me have known me all my life, and I am persuaded that few of them would be willing to see me indicted for the murder of Godfrey. I trust that within a few hours I shall be free to go whither I please, and I promise you to take the first steps toward satisfying your doubts concerning Miss Gordon. Cease to let your thoughts dwell sadly or doubtfully on my fate, for I am sure that I shall return to you before the day is over, cleared from the charge, so far as the dismissal of the magistrate can have that effect."

Mrs. Langley tried to believe him, and she resignedly answered:

"You must have your own way, I suppose, and I will make every effort to do what is best for you. I must go now and see how poor Inez has passed the night. Oh! Guy, how shall I ever tell her what has happened?"

"Your good angel must guide you, Anna, and show you how to break it gently to the unfortunate girl. I would give a great deal if she had never come hither to have her heart broken in so cruel a manner. Go to her now. Breakfast may soon be ready, and on this morning you must not keep it waiting."

Mrs. Langley kissed him tenderly, and holding his hand clasped closely in his own, she tearfully said:

"Forgive me, Guy, that I, for one moment, believed in the possibility of your guilt."

She hurried from the room, and crossed the hall, and tapped at the door of the dressing-room adjoining the chamber of Inez. In that a couch had been placed for Mrs. Perkins, and her hostess found her sitting by the only window, with her hands clasped in a hopeless manner, and her face clouded by anxiety and grief.

On the entrance of Mrs. Langley, she nervously arose, and, in guarded tones, said:

"Miss Inez is sleeping at last, ma'am. She moaned and went on in such a manner till nearly day as went to my heart; and once, after she fell asleep, she cried out in agony: 'Oh! there is blood—blood on my conscience! *His* blood! Oh Virgin Mother take its stain from my soul!' I went in to her, but she was sleeping under the influence of the drops you told me to persuade her to take."

Mrs. Langley listened with a strange thrill of emotion. She softly said:

"I am glad she slept, at all events, Mrs. Perkins. I will go in now and look at her."

The door of communication was partly open, and, gliding through it, Mrs. Langley stood beside the bed of Inez. She lay like a broken flower upon her pillow, all the color gone from her rounded cheeks, all the brightness from her beaming face. Heavy, dark circles were beneath her eyes, and the pale lips wore an expression of suffering and sadness that went to the heart of her friend.

Inez was under the influence of morphine, and her fingers moved nervously at intervals, as if trying to grasp something that eluded them. The fixed gaze of Mrs. Langley disturbed her, and she suddenly unclosed her large, dark eyes, and asked:

"Where am I? What has happened to bring me to this strange place? Who are you, and what are you doing in my room? or, rather, what am I doing in this room, for it does not belong to me?"

Mrs. Langley bent forward and softly said:

"Inez, darling, don't you know me? I am the friend to whose house you came yesterday. Don't you remember that I brought you out from Natchez?"

"From Natchez?" she dreamily repeated. "What was I doing there? Ah! I remember now,—I came hither to find my love—my betrothed. I believed him true; I trusted him as my own soul; but he was false to me—false—*false*. I have repaid him, though. Do you think it wrong to take life, madam? If you do, condemn me, for I have killed him. I have Spanish blood in my veins, and it rose against him till I could not hold my hand, and he lies stark and cold, done to death by this feeble hand. Look at it. Does it look strong enough to take a human life?"

Inez held up her hand, exquisite in shape and delicacy, and surveyed it with her wild, dark eyes, as she rambled on:

"It has no crimson stain upon it, but *that* is on my soul. There is no atonement without sacrifice; that was the creed of my ancestors, for I am of Hebrew descent. Those grand and merciless old Israelites always avenged their wrongs, and I have avenged mine in the only way left to a helpless and deserted girl. Was it wrong to take my cause in my own hands? Don't tell me it was, for if you do I will kill myself, and then I shall go into everlasting torment, 'where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched!'"

Mrs. Langley listened to these wild wanderings with a chilling doubt in her mind as to whether they were not the offspring of guilt, yet she believed it impossible that Inez could have been the destroyer of Fenton. She tenderly said:

"Inez, you must not talk in such a strain as that. You have done nothing to deserve such a fate. Compose yourself, and try to remember what has lately happened."

"I do remember all too clearly. I came here to find my living lover, and I found him dead to me; this morning he is dead to all. Have you not heard that Godfrey Fenton has been sent to his account by the hand of one he had wronged?
If you have not, it is time that you knew it."

And she ended with a laugh that froze the blood in the listener's veins.

Mrs. Perkins came in and said:

"She has been going on that way all night, ma'am; but it don't mean anything. She got up once and tried to get out of the house, but I was on the watch, and I followed her and brought her back. My poor child is going the way her mother went before her. She died melancholy mad, and my darling is getting in the same condition because that faithless man jilted her."

"Are you quite *sure* that she did not leave the house, Mrs. Perkins? Yet why do I ask such a question? Inez did not know the way to Silvermere, and she could never have been the perpetrator of what was done there last night. But it is very strange that her ravings should take this form. Come with me into the next room. I have something to tell you that she must not hear."

Mrs. Perkins followed her, and when Mrs. Langley had carefully closed the door, she said:

"By what clairvoyance does that poor girl know that Godfrey Fenton is dead? It is certainly true that he was killed last night by some unknown hand."

The woman listened in horror.

"Dead—killed! and my darling talking in this strange way! Oh, Mrs. Langley, I declare to you that she never left this house through the night. I did not undress at all; I sat up the whole time watching her. I had dozed off a minute when she had got in the hall, but she did not know how to unfasten the door, and I found her standing before it in her bare feet, with her hair hanging all over her. She was too weak to resist me, and I took her in my arms, and brought her back again. She has been in bed ever since, and about an hour before day she fell into the sleep from which she roused just now. Don't mind anything she says, for her mind is only rambling."

"It is a singular hallucination, and under present circumstances, may prove a very sad one, unless we keep it from the knowledge of others. You and I must watch over her ourselves, Mrs. Perkins, and try and bring back the light of reason to her mind. That by some inscrutable means, she has become aware of Godfrey's death, is evident, or she would not talk as she did just now."

"He deserved to die," said the woman savagely; "but my poor child is as innocent of killing him as the angels in Heaven. I hope you don't suspect her of such wickedness as that. I've seen her many a time take a bug, or a worm out of her path to keep others from treading on them. She never hurt anything in her life, and she loved the very ground that bad man stepped on. He would have been the last one she would have injured, though he has worked her such bitter woe. I must tell you something about the Lopez family, ma'am, and then you will see that Miss Inez has inherited a sort of second sight from them."

"They have been a grand family in their day, Mrs. Langley, and as long as they kept with their own people, they were rich, and powerful; but for two generations, they have married with what they call Gentiles. The father and grandfather of Miss Inez took Christian wives; one was an English woman, the other an American. Well—from the date of the first marriage the old gentleman declared that he was haunted by a familiar spirit that foretold to him all the evil that was coming on him."

"He had enough, poor soul! for there are seven graves in the churchyard in Cuba, in which his children lie buried. Miss Inez's father was the only one left, and he didn't do much good in the world. After the old man died, the spirit came to *him*, and he always knew beforehand a great deal that was going to happen to him. He was a firm believer in all them spirit rappings that so much fuss is made about of late years. You have heard how he sent Miss Inez to the old place to look for the will that was hidden in the wall. She did not find it, it's true, but she found the place her father described, and it's pretty certain now that it was taken from it before she went. Now her pa is dead, I suppose the spirit comes to her to tell her what she ought to know. That is the only way I can account for her words just now."

Mrs. Langley listened to this singular statement with incredulity, though she did not doubt the implicit faith of the narrator in its truth. She only said:

"It is very strange and may account for what Inez has said. At all events, I shall be able to evade the sad task of telling her of Godfrey's fate. Watch constantly over her, Mrs. Perkins. I must go out to breakfast now, but I will bring in her's myself, and remain with her through the morning, while you gain the repose I see you so greatly need."

"Thank you, ma'am. I've hardly slept a wink, but I don't feel a bit like sleeping after hearing such news as you told me just now. I am afraid my poor darling will never get over all this trouble, and it's hard to go over with her all that I went through with her mother."

"Don't think of anything so sad as that, Mrs. Perkins. I believe that Inez will have strength to rally from the shock she has received, and recover her usual health of mind and body."

"God grant it, ma'am," replied the faithful nurse, with a heavy sigh; and Mrs. Langley again entered the apartment of Inez.

She found her lying in that dreamy state which is produced by the drug she had taken; she was neither sleeping nor waking, and her heavy eyelids were not again lifted.

Her visitor softly left the room and went to see if the breakfast-table was properly arranged. Mrs. Langley assumed outward composure, and when the three young men came in she greeted the visitors with grave and quiet courtesy.

The meal was eaten almost in silence, and when the sound of a carriage driving to the door was heard, Denham arose and said:

"I believe that we are quite ready now, Wallis, and we may as well go at once. It is useless to defer a painful task when it must be done."

Mrs. Langley raised her pale face to the young man as he offered her his hand, and impressively said:

"If you do not bring Guy off safe, Edward, I shall never find it in my heart to forgive you for coming to my house on such an errand as brought you here last night. You are responsible for his appearance in Natchez before those whose demand is blood for blood; and rather than not have it, they are ready to offer up an innocent victim on the altar of public opinion. Bring my brother back to me safe and cleared from the foul imputation you and others have sought to fasten on him, or never come into my presence again."

Wallis cowered before the indignant light of her dark eyes, and he almost humbly said:

"I—I hope that everything will go right, Mrs. Langley. I meant no evil to Guy by coming here with him, you know; and an old friend was better than a stranger. I don't believe now that he did what he is accused of, and although circumstances are against him, we don't give much weight to them in this State when a man's life is at stake. He will have fair play, and—and I'm sure I hope he will win through triumphantly."

The three went out together, but Denham came back to kiss his sister and give her a few consoling words before parting from her:

"I shall be back to dinner at the usual hour, dear Anna. I feel sure that I shall not be detained on such evidence as can be produced against me. The bitterness to me is, that I must undergo examination at all. I should doubt eternal justice if I could feel apprehensive as to the result of my trial. Before a magistrate's court it will be a simple thing enough, and I shall be dismissed to recover my equanimity as I best can."

"God grant that it may be so," was the fervent response, and the two parted with a tender embrace.

Denham was many years younger than Mrs. Langley, and she cherished for him an almost maternal regard. She was tenderly devoted to him, and with good reason, for Guy had been the stay and consolation of her life when her unhappiness in the marriage she had made forced her to separate from her husband.

Mr. Langley lived in Europe, and she knew no more of him than if they had never been more to each other than strangers. In early youth she had been persuaded by others to accept him, because he was a man of great wealth and made a fine appearance in society.

He proved an ill-tempered, overbearing tyrant in his domestic relations, and as no children bound them together, his wife took the bold step which released her from her intolerable bondage, and left him free to seek another if he wished to do so.

With a sinking heart Mrs. Langley saw the carriage drive away, but she rallied her courage and busied herself in arranging the breakfast of Inez upon a tray. She took it in herself and remained with her guest while Mrs. Perkins went out to the table and partook of the nourishment of which her long vigils made her greatly feel the need.

CHAPTER LIII.

The news of the tragical event of the night had already flown far and wide, and an excited crowd of people besieged the office of the magistrate in which the examination of the supposed criminal was to take place.

Denham's personal friends, and he had many warm and influential ones, hastened to the scene of action to bear testimony to his high character, and place that in the balance against the terrible array of circumstances that seemed to point to him as the assassin.

The judge was in a state of great nervous trepidation. He was nearly connected with Mrs. Markland, and had only been prevented from attending the wedding by sickness in his own family. He had known Guy Denham from his boyhood, and he was aware that a strong feeling of jealousy had grown up between the two lads who were dependent on her second husband.

That their differences would culminate in so dire a tragedy as this, Judge Dalton had never deemed possible, yet he was now called on to sit in judgment upon one of whom he had hitherto known nothing but good. He had never blamed Guy for the state of feeling that existed between himself and Fenton, for he knew that he had not been fairly treated by his uncle's widow, and he also knew that in all their difficulties Godfrey was usually the aggressor.

Must he condemn him? Give him over to the ignominy of a trial for life and death, when he was so nearly related to the surviving children of Mrs. Markland that the stain which fell on him must also taint them? It was a most painful position in which he found himself placed, but Judge Dalton finally determined to abide strictly by the evidence brought forward, and give his decision accordingly.

He had scarcely arrived at this sensible conclusion, when a knock came to the door of his private sanctum, and his clerk glibly spoke, though in a very guarded tone:

"Mr. Hastings is very anxious to see you a few moments, sir, before the trial opens. The parties are in court; Mr. Denham came in with young Wallis and John Talbot. I may as well tell you, sir, that the general impression seems to be that the examination will be a mere form. Mr. Hastings himself says that it will be impossible to fix the guilt of the murder on Denham. But of course you'll judge of that when you have heard the evidence."

"That will do, Mr. Thompson. I believe I understand what my duty is. Ask Mr. Hastings to walk in, and do you take care that I am not interrupted while he is with me."

"Yes, sir—of course, sir. He doubtless has something important to communicate to you."

"Then pray allow him to come in, and tell me what it is. The time is getting on, and the hour fixed for the trial will soon be here."

The speaker's tone was slightly irritated, and with a bow, the talkative young man hastened to withdraw and inform Mr. Hastings that the Judge would receive him.

He came in, and carefully closed the door, and the Judge started as he saw how old and broken he looked. In a tone of deep sympathy, he said:

"This has been a terrible shock to you, I can see, Hastings. I hope that your daughter has not suffered from it as you have, though it was a dreadful thing to have her bridegroom killed within a few hours of their union."

"My daughter lies stupefied by opiates, but when she is permitted to regain the comprehension of what is passing around her, she has youth and unbroken health to sustain her. With me, it is different, and this blow has fallen very heavily upon me. I feel it as you cannot comprehend; it is not only that Godfrey has been violently torn from us, but that——"

He stopped abruptly, as if he had been on the eve of inadvertently revealing the heaviest weight of care that rested on his heart.

"I understand," said Dalton. "The imputation that rests on so near a connexion of your daughter's husband is indeed hard to bear."

"It is not that—no—it is not that, for I swear to you that I believe Guy Denham to be as innocent of all participation in this murder as I am, or you yourself are. I will do him that much justice let what will come of it. I am here to-day as his friend, not as his accuser."

Mr. Hastings sat down, wiped from his brow the great drops that agitation had brought there, and the Judge regarded him with a sympathetic, but puzzled face. He said:

"If you stand by Denham in this way, there is little chance that he will meet with condemnation from others. May I ask on what grounds your conviction of his innocence is based?"

"On very strong ones, but I—I cannot state them in a public court-room; neither can I explain to you why this conviction is in my own mind. Think yourself what this young man's life has been—how high-toned, even chivalrous his nature is, and you will see how impossible such a crime would be to him. There was no cause for such vengeance; angry words may have passed between him and Godfrey, but I am certain that no lasting ill-feeling followed them. There was no real cause of enmity, and Guy Denham is the last man to take so unfair an advantage of his foe, even if poor Godfrey had been such. But he was not, I repeat."

The earnestness of the speaker impressed the Judge, but with some reserve he said:

"When I have heard the evidence, I can better judge what weight to give it. Of course, the high character the prisoner has hitherto borne must tell greatly in his favor."

"Yes—yes—it must save him from the shame of an indictment for Godfrey's murder. I tell you it *must*;" and he looked into the face of his companion with an expression that made him doubt for a few moments if he was quite sane.

Dalton coldly asked:

"Am I to understand, Mr. Hastings, that you have come here to dictate to me the course that justice should take? This seems to me a most unprecedented proceeding."

"The situation is unprecedented, Dalton. If I could tell you *all*, you would understand; but I cannot. I have only this to say to you as an old friend, and one I have highly valued. If Guy Denham is sent from your court, branded with the charge of murder, I must do that which will bring my gray hairs to the grave in dishonor. The pistol found on the sward was his, but it has lain there in the window of my library unclaimed for months. It was taken from there by the assassin, to throw the odium of the deed upon him, I feel convinced?

"Then you must possess some clue to the real murderer, and wish to shield him. I can come to no other conclusion from your words, Mr. Hastings."

The directness of this inference unnerved Mr. Hastings, and his extreme agitation prevented him from replying for several moments. The Judge poured out a glass of water and offered it to him, and after drinking a small portion, he faintly said:

"I did not come hither to accuse another, but to do what I could to save Guy. You are to understand that what passes between us here is never to be repeated or referred to in any way. When you were a struggling young lawyer, I assisted you to gain a foothold in your profession, and you have received from me many favors since that time. I refer to these things now because it is of vital importance to me to find a friend in the judge before whom this case is to be tried. I tell you, Dalton, that all I value in life must be resigned if some way is not found to save this unfortunate young man."

To this appeal Dalton gravely replied:

"I will do what I honestly can to serve you, Mr. Hastings, and I admit the force of the claims you have upon me; but I cannot understand how you yourself can be so deeply implicated in this affair as your words would lead me to suppose."

"It is so; yet I cannot explain. My secret is my own; and, although it is dragging me to the grave, I cannot unfold it. Look at me: see what I have lately suffered—what I still suffer; and then, if you can add to the burden I am bearing, God help me! for there is no help in man."

There was silence between them for a few moments, and then Dalton said:

"This is the strongest confidence I ever received in my life."

"It is not a confidence; I am confiding nothing to you beyond the fact that this man is innocent of the crime imputed to him, and I know him to be so, though I cannot fully state the grounds on which my conviction rests. But I have said all that I came to say, and to you I must leave the rest. You would not willingly do a wrong; and to condemn Guy would be the greatest one you could commit."

Mr. Hastings arose made an effort to steady himself upon his feet, and suddenly sunk down again, feeling in his pocket in a half-dozed way for something he could not find there. With an effort, he said:

"I was near forgetting something that is important. I have a note for you from Mrs. Markland. I thought it was in my pocket, but I must have put it into my hat. My head isn't quite as clear this morning as it should be."

On looking into the hat, the missive was found; and, wondering if his old friend had not been drinking deeply, early in the morning as it was, Dalton opened it and read the following linds:

> COUSIN JAMES: I write these lines in a state of feeling that baffles description. How I have the courage to write at all is a mystery to me; but I must do so, suffer as I will in making the effort.
>
> My son—my pride, my joy—lies dead in this house destroyed by some unknown hand! I, his mother would give half what I possess to know who committed the act that has desolated my life; but, in the frenzy of the hour, an innocent man must not be made to bear the burden of another's guilt.
>
> Guy Denham did not do it; he asserted his innocence over the dead body of my son in such a way as convinced me that he knows no more of the perpetrator of the deed than I do.
>
> Remember that *I* tell you this. Remember, also, how nearly Guy is related to my daughters—how fondly they are attached to him—and do not give them the additional sorrow of knowing that he is to be arraigned, through your decision, as the assassin of their brother.
>
> I shall spare no expense to discover the real criminal; and I feel assured that my nephew will aid me in every possible manner to do so, if he has freedom of action restored to him.
>
> Your broken-hearted cousin,
> GERTRUDE MARKLAND.

Dalton read this very carefully, and after pondering a few moments, said:

"Mrs. Markland takes the same view of the case that you do. Did she write this without being influenced to do so?"

"If you mean, did *I* attempt such a thing? I answer *no*. I have not seen Mrs. Markland since last night, nor communicated with her in any way. I do not even know the contents of her letter."

Dalton handed it to him, and Mr. Hastings rapidly ran his eyes over the lines. As he returned them he said:

"Mrs. Markland has done what is noble and just. Deep as her anguish for the loss of her son is, she is unwilling that injury that will be almost irreparable shall be inflicted on Guy. The suspicions that must cling to him will be hard enough to bear, without having his life actually placed in danger by sustaining this shameful charge."

Dalton rather coldly replied:

"I can only promise to sift the evidence very carefully, and act according to the convictions of my own mind. My position, you are aware, is a responsible one, and I must do my duty. But our criminal laws are not very strict, and I may find it possible to dismiss the charge without violating my own sense of right."

"That is all I can reasonably ask. I will leave you now to take my place near the prisoner."

Mr. Hastings moved slowly toward the door, with some difficulty made his way through the dense crowd already assembled in the public room, and, grasping Denham's hand, sunk down in a seat beside him.

Guy was looking pale, but perfectly composed, and he gratefully said:

"I cannot too deeply thank you, Mr. Hastings, for standing by me in this painful strait. I shall never forget your goodness."

"It is all I can do for you, Guy. Others shall at least see that *I* have no faith in this absurd charge. Keep up your spirits, for I am sure that nothing can be done with you."

The entrance of the judge caused a slight bustle, and after he had taken his seat the proceedings commenced. I shall not describe them, for such things have been too often depicted to afford much interest to the general reader.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

A DISTRESSED HEIR.

Harpalus gave his riches to the poor—
His hopeful nephew penniless remained;
Thus shall the youth, with feelings truly sore,
Weep at his grave, and show a grief unfeigned.

◆

To Promote Health.

Do not expect, sir, some wonderful announcement, some fascinating mystery. No. It is simply the plain little practice of leaving your bedroom window a little open at the top while sleeping, both winter and summer. I do not come before you as a theorist or an inexperienced teacher, in thus calling loudly upon every family to this healthful practice. I am the father of ten children, all in pure health, and have—thank God—never lost one, although their natural constitutions were not robust. But in addition to the salutary effect of the practice in my own family, wherever I have advised others to try its effects, it has invariably been found to be both pleasant and beneficial.

◆

Reputation after Death.

It is very singular how the fact of a man's death often seems to give people a truer idea of his character, whether for good or evil, than they have ever possessed while he was living and acting among them. Death is so genuine a fact that it excludes falsehoods, or betrays its emptiness; it is a touchstone that proves the gold and dishonors the baser metal. Could the departed, whoever he may be, return in a week after his decease, he would almost invariably find himself at a higher or a lower point than he had formerly occupied on the scale of public appreciation.

◆

—If you happen to fall into company where the talk runs into party, obscenity, scandal, folly, or vice of any kind, you had better pass for morose or unsocial among people whose good opinion is not worth having, than shock your own conscience by joining in conversation which you must disapprove of.

◆

—Pleasure is seldom found where it is sought. Our brightest blazes of gladness are commonly kindled by unexpected sparks.

AUTUMNAL ANTHEM.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Autumn, thy crown is glorious,
And beautiful thy plumes,
And exquisite thy myriad hues
Amid the forest-glooms.

And soft and sweet the anthems played
By low winds on the lutes
Of waters answering underneath
Old overhanging roots.

And solemn is the sky that thinks
In sober state above,
Still holding on its cloudy thrones
The Universal Love.

I own all other seasons' worth,
Their movements like great psalms
Of joy *or* grief that gild *or* cloud
The everrolling times.

But Autumn, thou art for the bard
In mingling blight and bloom,
And seem'st a fitting epitaph
On some creation's tomb,
Now gone to rest, while by its emptied hearse
The Deity breathed out another universe.

SCRAPS OF ADVENTURE.

FROM AN OLD SAILOR'S LOG-BOOK.

No. XXX.

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

ARAB SOLDIERS.—A DOUBLE EXECUTION!

At noon, as he had promised, Ali Ben Harib returned, and by that time Fiddy and I had got our clothing dried, and were as good as new. We had overcome the enervating effects of the extended sea-bath, and were feeling in good health and good spirits. Ali's whole budget of information was comprised in the first few words he spoke:

"I have been into the town," he said, "and I find that there are quite a number of English officers stopping with the consul. Of course you do not wish to meet them; for, should they not discover that you had deserted from one of their ships, they would be sure to impress you. There are treaty regulations by which the English can place their hands upon their own subjects anywhere beneath the flag of Morocco outside of the Pacha's own walls. My plan is, that you darken your faces, and put on garbs like ours, and remain quiet until we can find a vessel in which you can with safety trust yourselves."

I may remark here, once for all, that I placed the most implicit confidence in our new friend, and I felt as safe under his care as I could have felt under the care of an own brother. He had told me the truth about the saving of his life by the crew of the American vessel, and his gratitude was deep and abiding; and, moreover, he had resolved that he would repay for that service by serving us.

During the afternoon our host, Hassan Albah, procured two fishermen's dresses for us, and with the juice of a shrub which very closely resembled our common alder he and Ali stained the skin of our faces and necks and hands; and when the metamorphosis was complete, and I came to look into Hassan's little metallic mirror, I should hardly have known myself. In the evening Ali told us he was going to Gibraltar. He had several errands to do for himself, and for his friends and neighbors, though his chief business was on our account.

Ali was gone two days, and during that time Fiddy and I helped Hassan. On the morning after the interpreter's departure we made signs to him that we should like to go out with him in his boat, and help him to catch fish, and he manifested much pleasure. We went with him, and Fiddy chanced to have extraordinary luck. We went, also, on the second day, and I was glad to know that Hassan was greatly pleased with the assistance we had rendered; for Fiddy was an expert fisherman, and he showed to our host a method of cleaning the fish far superior to the primitive and clumsy method which he had been in the habit of following.

During the succeeding night Ali returned, and the intelligence he brought was very cheering. What he had done for us may be gathered from the following announcement:

"I have seen a friend of mine in Gibraltar, who keeps a fruit shop near the mole," he said, "and with him I have made arrangement for getting you off. He speaks English very well, and he will go on board the first American vessel that arrives at Gibraltar from up the sea, and inform the captain that there are two American seamen at Tangier who have been cast away, and are waiting for an opportunity to return home; and if he will lay in towards the town and heave to as he passes out, the men will come off in a boat."

Surely that was good news, and I felt sure that the hour of our deliverance could not be far distant; and I think that Ali appreciated the deep gratitude which we manifested. At all events, his dark eyes sparkled with pleasure, and he declared that it made him happy to serve us. And I believed him.

On the third morning I proposed to go again with Hassan and help him catch fish; but he was not going out that day. There was to be an execution at the fort, and he and his companions were going to witness it; and Ali declared there could be no danger in our going also. The circumstances were these: Two Jews, doing business in the city, had betrayed a government caravan into the hands of a troop of Bedouin robbers. The caravan had been owned in part by the Pasha, and was bound to the Levant by the way of Egypt and the Isthmus, and these two Jews, in consideration of large pay, had given such information as led the robbers to understand when and where, and with what force, to attack it. The criminals had been tried before the Military Prefect of Tangier, and had been sentenced to be beheaded. At first I hesitated about going.

"There can be no danger," said Ali. "There will be a crowd; and in your present garb, with your faces colored as they are, no one will think of your being else than what you appear."

I must confess to a little weakness at this point. I had not hesitated from fear of being detected; but I had been moved by an instinctive shrinking from witnessing such an execution. There was something horrible in the thought of seeing the heads of two human beings cut off. I thought of the guillotine of France, and of the awful scenes I had heard described by one who had witnessed its working. But I was weak enough to hold back from making my feelings known for fear that my friends would think I was a child; so I told them I would go. And after breakfast we started off.

But before reaching the city I came across a scene which interested me much, and which I contemplated with peculiar emotions, for never before had I witnessed such a picture of human degradation in connection with a national institution.

Just outside the wall of the town, upon the low sandy plain, we found an encampment of soldiers belonging to the standing army of Morocco. Part of them were Negroes, and a part were Bedouin Arabs. And how do you think, dear reader, they were uniformed?—for Ali assured me that they were in full military costume. I will tell you. The first squad we came to were on the march, evidently going to guard duty. The only article of clothing was a single coarse blanket, passed over the left shoulder, and brought together and secured under the right arm. A powder-horn was suspended from the right shoulder, and hung under the left arm, while the weapon was a long, heavy musket. And that was the full extent of "arm and equipment." No covering or protection of any kind for the feet; no clothing for the legs; nothing but the one blanket, the upper edge of which was so gathered up in one place that it could be thrown over the head in case of storm, or of extreme heat. And these were soldiers!

A little further on we came to a batch of these Bedouins lying upon the sand asleep; and I saw scores of black sand-flies settled about the corners of their eyes and mouths, and the sleepers seemed to be no more troubled thereby than they would have been by the passing zephyrs. And yet a single one of those sharply-biting sand-pests would have put me in torture.

And those were soldiers! But the whole army was not like this. This was a regiment for desert service, and they were not allowed to quarter inside the city walls; but they were in the employ of government, and were duly mustered in and enrolled! I asked Ali how those men would fight; and he told me that against a force anywhere equal with themselves they were good for nothing; but they were generally called to operate against small bands of robbers, and their chief point of excellence was in the speed with which they could move on foot. They had been known to march fifty miles in a day without any great degree of fatigue. I looked upon these human beings as we passed on, but I had no desire to stop. I could see all I desired to see while on the move.

And now, dear reader, if you are of a tender and delicate nature, and are apt to suffer over scenes of horror, you had better not go with me into the city, for it was a horrible scene I was about to witness, and I must confess that it made me heart-sick for a long time. And even now, with many a long year lying between that day and the present, I can feel the old sensation at my heart as I call up the picture which I then beheld.

There were guards at the gate—rather better dressed than those we had seen outside, but filthy enough in all conscience sake,—guards who seemed to be placed there to overlook only suspicious characters, for they did not trouble us. It was a strange scene to me as I entered the town;—the narrow streets—some of them not more than wide enough for the passage of one of our common Yankee handcarts,—the low-posted houses, with many windows, but no glass,—most of them constructed of earth and lime, seeming to have been built up while the material was in a plastic state—built just as we would rear a wall of clear mortar, suffering it to dry and harden as we proceeded,—and in the end only presenting a slight improvement upon the mud huts of the savages. And then the quaintly dressed people—Turks, Moors, Jews, Arabs, Berbers, Shellocks, and Negroes,—all equally at home in the filthy streets, and yet of distinct races and garbs. The Berbers and Shellocks seem to have descended from some ancient inhabitants of the country, and are now chiefly engaged in agricultural pursuits.

Ali was acquainted with some of the petty officers of the guard, and thus we gained admission to the ground directly in front of the wall upon which the execution was to take place. This wall was about twelve feet high, and I should judge, from the manner in which people moved around upon its top, that it was almost as thick. One of the guard went with us and pointed out where the execution was to take place, and we were at liberty to choose our own positions, for not many people had begun to gather in that particular locality, though they came crowding in when they saw the guard post us.

We had not a great while to wait. By and by our ears were saluted by the shouts of those who stood behind us, and who could see further over than we could, and presently the party made its appearance. First came an officer, clad in rich Moorish garb, with his sword over his shoulder; then followed a squad of six soldiers with muskets; then two men clad in black, with black crape dominoes over their faces. Behind these came the prisoners, with their arms pinioned, each led by an armed guard; and behind these followed six more soldiers with muskets.

My attention was first fixed upon those two darkly-clad men with the crape dominoes; for it needed not Ali's whispered notice to inform me that they were the executioners. Each bore in his hand a heavy, crooked sabre, which, even from where I stood, I could see had been recently ground sharp; while in his black sash he wore a long-bladed knife. They were evidently Moors, as I judged from their lithe figures and peculiarly graceful movements; and as they bore their naked sabres, the long, curved blades resting in the hollows of their left arms, moving on so easily and assuredly, I regarded them as a pair of dark Fates belonging to the ill-starred couple that followed directly behind.

The prisoners were certainly pitiable looking objects. Their swart features were entirely bloodless, and I doubt if their limbs would have supported them if they had not been upheld by their conductors. A few of the spectators manifested emotions of satisfaction, while a few seemed to be moved by sympathy; but by far the greater portion of those whom I could see appeared to regard the fates of the condemned with utter indifference, gazing upon the scene as they would have gazed upon any other exhibition given for their entertainment. I did not see a Jew in the throng of witnesses.

The officer stopped at the place which our guide had pointed out to us, and as the prisoners came up they were halted and caused to face towards the assembled multitude. They looked up once and took a hurried survey of the scene, and then one of them turned to the officer and spoke. I judged that he begged for mercy; but if he did he gained no satisfaction. The master of the ceremonies drew a paper from his bosom, and read aloud what was written upon it; and Ali informed me that it was an account of the prisoners' crime, and the sentence that had been passed upon them. When the document had been read, the officer turned to those who had led the prisoners and made a motion with his hands, whereupon each drew a long strip of black cloth from the bosom of his jubbee, which he bound securely over the eyes of his charge.

At this moment I could not help feeling the most acute sympathy for the condemned pair. The binding on of those hoodwinks shut out the light of day forever from their vision, and it was plain to be seen that in their thoughts they were bidding a last farewell to the scenes of earth. O, it must have been a bitter moment for them—by far the bitterest of all the moments they had ever lived!

As the attendants moved back, after having adjusted the hoodwinks, the heads of the prisoners dropped, and they were not again raised. The last spark of hope had gone out, and they resigned themselves to their fate. At this juncture other men, rough-clad and filthy, came upon the scene, bearing two long wooden boxes, which were set down close behind where the prisoners stood; and as the bearers moved back the officer waved his hand, and the Jews were caused to kneel. I had supposed that some sort of a block would be used; but such was no part of the plan. The prisoners kneealt, and as they bent their heads forward the men who had led them pulled back the clothing from their necks.

As I saw the first executioner step forward and swing his sabre gracefully into the air above his head, my heart sickened; but my eyes were riveted upon the scene, and I could not remove them. There was an arching gleam of light in the air where the bright blade swept on its course; the flash seemed to penetrate the neck of the kneeling man; and the head fell, severed entirely at a single stroke. For a few seconds, or, perhaps, not more than a single second, the body remained perfectly still, and as, with a convulsive movement it seemed inclined to pitch toward the front of the parapet, one of the attendants caught it and drew it backward from our sight. Meantime the executioner lifted the head by its hair, and held it up to the gaze of the spectators. It was a horrible sight; but there was a sight still more horrible in reserve.

The second executioner, when his companion had performed his work, raised his sabre, and either from a lack of force in the blow, or from some other cause, the head of his victim was not severed, but it dropped and hung, and the body would have pitched forward had not the first executioner caught it by the shoulders. And then I saw why the headsmen carried those knives in their girdles. The unsuccessful man dropped his sabre and drew his knife, and with a vigor which was evidently the result of chagrin, he took the head by the hair in his left hand, and with a single drawing stroke of the knife finished his work.

As I have already intimated, I can never forget that picture. Now, as then, my heart throbs when I call to mind the horrible scene; and from that day I have never wished to see another human being beheaded. I have seen emblems of mortality in nearly every shape; but the sight of that bleeding head, with the eyes staring, and the mouth gasping, was too dreadful to gaze upon.

I turned away from the scene, and when I looked upon Fiddy's face I found it as pale as death. He returned my look, and said to me, in a shuddering tone—

"Becket, I wonder if I look as bad as you do."

"If you do not," said I, "then I must look dreadful indeed."

But I saw no others thus affected. The great mass of the spectators seemed entirely satisfied with what they had seen; and I have no doubt that to the majority it had been a rare entertainment.

WHAT CHILDHOOD SHOULD BE.

If it were not too serious a subject for mirth, one might often laugh at the superhuman virtue required by adults, of little children. "Be good," says the autocrat of the family—mother, father, uncle or aunt, as the case may be—"be good." Now being "good" in this instance may mean, that a restless little creature, brimming with pent-up vitality, shall not touch a finger to any article, in a small, confined room, except toys whose magic virtues he long since exhausted, having turned them over, day after day, for weeks, without a solitary word of interest or sympathy having been addressed him in his efforts to extract amusement from the same. At length he cries—cries simply because he is weary and has nothing to do. "Be good," thunders the family autocrat—"be good;" which, translated, means, don't trouble *me*. Now if instead, the autocrat were to take the little creature in his or her lap, in an easy position, so as to rest the little tired limbs, and tell it a story to withdraw its thoughts a while from itself, and give it material out of which to build a little play, which you should presently see him jump down from the lap in glee to rehearse, would it not be vastly more sensible, as well as reasonable?

"Naughtiness," so styled, is oftener than anything else, in young children, want of occupation, confined apartments and insufficient ventilation. The truth is, that "all out doors," as the phrase is, is the only proper apartment for them. *There* is variety; *there* is space; *there* is fresh air. A child brought up wholly in the city, accustomed only to the limitations of a daily walk, is really defrauded of its "childhood;" and, what is more mournful, the theft can never be atoned for in after life. *Nothing* can make up to it, for the gleeful delight of picking shells upon the seashore, or paddling with dimpled feet in the foam of the waves, or plucking handsful of flowers, wheresoever it chooses to stray, or looking at the animal creation, every one of which, from a caterpillar to an ox, is a marvel and a wonder, compared to which a toyshop is of no interest whatever. Simply as an educating process, without regard to health, or pleasure, it is of more value than any other to childhood; we are taking it for granted that such a child is neither fettered by fine clothes, or tyrannized over by a stupid, ignorant, selfish nurse, who replies to every intelligent query, "Hold your tongue!" or "Don't bother!"

I think that I can always select, from out the grown people I meet, those who, when they came into the world, brought their welcome with them, and over whose infancy heaven's dew and sunshine fell, without stint or limit. What crosses soever in after life they may have been called to bear in a world of mutation, still the eye, at times, brightens, and the worn hands clasp each other, while the eyes seem to be looking back through the far years, as you hear from their lips these slowly-voiced words, "I had such a *happy* childhood!" And now, when the chosen voice, that promised to cherish, is harsh, and stern, and cold, and "duty" is in place of love, and the years move all too slowly and wearily to the coveted grave, there still will remain *this* blessed memory! Perhaps some one scene, stands out in bold relief against all the dark years; some day when the childish grief had reached its climax; and sympathy and love came raining into the little aching heart, healing wheresoever it touched, till smiles chased the tears away, and sobs were turned to kisses. And if, at such a memory and its dark contrast, the agonized cry should escape, "Oh, *mother! mother!*" who shall tell me that eternity has severed such strong heart-strings? What were life worth, if one believed this?

FANNY FERN.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A WASHINGTON WIFE.—This afflicted lady says that her husband, who, before he came to Washington as an office-holder, was a temperate, exemplary and Christian man, has now become a drunkard, a profligate and a gambler. "I don't know," she says, "but my present sufferings are a punishment for my sinful pride and folly. When my husband got his office, and we came here to live in a fine house, I felt very proud, and began to neglect many duties which ought not to have been left undone, and indulged in foolish vanities, and now, alas! it has all come to this misery. How much better it would have been for us if we had never come to this hateful city, which is full of sin and wickedness on every side, but had stayed in our quiet little home in the West, where we had love and peace and purity, and our children were growing up in virtue and intelligence, though in a humble sphere of life. But, alas! all is changed now, and I see nothing but ruin for us all. What can I do to get out of such a terrible condition? I care more for our children than all else. If I could only *save them* I should be content. For my husband I have no hope." Why not take your children and go to the little farm which you say you inherited from your father, and which is still yours? You would there have them safe from the contagion of the life which you now so much abhor, and could bring them up to industry, frugality and virtue. And perhaps, when your husband loses his office, he would follow you to your quiet home and begin life anew, freed from the temptations which now beset him.

AUBURN M. writes: "A young lady came to spend the evening with my boarding mistress, who introduced me to her. I spent the evening in company of her and the people I am boarding with. At nine o'clock she rose to go; I offered to accompany her; she hesitated, but finally accepted: did I do right?" You would have been a boor not to offer to see the young lady home, if she had no other protector, at that hour of the evening. Her hesitation was probably only another way of saying, "I am sorry to trouble you." The same correspondent says a lady has invited him to play on her piano as often as he pleases, and asks: "Is it right for me to do so?" Yes, if she is sincere, and you play well; but we have always thought the middle of some remote woods would be the proper place for the inharmonious sounds of beginners, practicing music.

PHYSICIAN.—As the young lady engaged herself to her betrothed, by letter, before she was seventeen, and has never seen him since—a period of more than two years—the chances are that the attachment between them is not of a very tenacious character, and if you let things take their natural course it is probable their engagement will come to an end by mutual consent. A man who enters into an engagement with a girl of sixteen ought not to be surprised if she changes her mind after a few years of experience and intercourse with society. You have done right not to press your suit, since you learned of her pre-existing betrothal; but if she should choose to abandon her old engagement you would have a right to avail yourself of the chances which fortune might throw in your way.

E. R. K.—There is no doubt that an enterprising and intelligent young man who should go to China or Japan, in the service of an American or English house, could make "a good thing of it." The trade with Southern and Eastern Asia is going to increase with great rapidity, and will in a few years be something marvelous; and any able young man who goes into it in a subordinate position, and masters its facts and principles step by step, and learns the language of China or Japan, or both, may work himself into a splendid and commanding position. But one who should spend his leisure time in idleness and dissipation would be pretty certain to remain an underling all his days, and to come to an early grave.

J. K.—Whether you, as vice-president of the association, were entitled to the presidency thereof on the resignation of the president, depends upon the provisions of the constitution and by-laws relating to such matters. If they provide that the officers shall be elected annually, and serve one year, and do *not* provide that on the resignation or death of an officer a successor shall be elected to fill the vacancy, then, on the resignation of the president, you were entitled to act in his place and stead for the remainder of the term. But if it be provided that on any office becoming vacant the society shall fill the vacancy by a special election, then *your* society had a right to elect a president to take the place of the one who had resigned.

T. M. S.—"What do young men mean," asks this young lady, "when they talk about *coral lips* and *cerulean eyes?* There is a young man in our town who is always talking to the young ladies about such things; and I do believe that if he were talking of a cat, he would speak of her as having coral lips, cerulean eyes and raven tresses. What can be done to abate such a nuisance?" All the girls should combine to ridicule and laugh him down. They could soon extinguish him, if they would enter into the matter with spirit, and much amusement could they get out of it, too.

DEBATOR.—The unruly and vulgar-speaking member of your association, who so grossly offends you all with his indecorous speech and vile manners, should be expelled. No society should allow *one* member to spoil the pleasure of all its other members and defeat the object of its formation. Why do you not take a hint from Homer, (whom you say your class is now reading,) and some Ulysses among you take this college Thersites in hand, and stop his "flow of contumelious rhetoric profuse" by a vigorous application of hickory.

W. L.—"Froissart's Chronicles" would probably be the book you want. It contains a large fund of narrative, anecdote, biography, etc., told in a simple and quaint style by the old chronicler, who was a cotemporary of the Black Prince, Chandos, Du Guesclin, and other renowned warriors of that chivalrous age. The book is scarce, but you can hunt it up somewhere.

B. S.—You are too young to marry, by four years, and so is the girl. Therefore, you can very well afford to wait until the girl's parents will give their consent. Your attempt to induce her to elope with you was a base piece of conduct, and shows that the parents' dislike of you is not without some reasonable foundation.

ALICE B.—"If a wife should get a divorce from her husband, and that man married again, would the second wife be a lawful one?" Formerly, in all such cases, the husband could marry again. Now, where the fault is his, he is, in some of the States, restrained from marrying another wife.

MONTANA.—Cupid, it seems, is already playing his pranks in the far-off wildernesses of Montana, "and girls," to quote from our correspondent, "are just as fickle in the frontier cabin as in the city palace. The fact is," continues MONTANA, "wherever two fellows are after one girl, she *will* take advantage of one or the other of 'em. Out here, the girls are so powerful scarce as to give 'em a great advantage over us bachelors. There are, on an average, about forty men to one woman, so that thirty-nine out of every forty of us have got to go unmarried, or else emigrate for a wife. This leads to queer doings. For instance, I was engaged to be married, and thought I had every thing sure, and went over to a ranche about fifteen miles off to get some wedding fixings, and when I got back the next day, I found that my girl had married a fellow from up country, who happened to come along, and had gone to his ranche with him. Such a thing as suing a woman here for breach-of-promise would be absurd, and I know no way but to go up and shoot the fellow, and then marry the widow, and inherit his property. It seems to me that any kind of revenge would be justifiable in such a case, but my mother, who is old and shaky, don't want any violence, and so I thought I'd ask you what you think about it." You seem to have become as savage as the Indians and wild beasts among whom you have cast your lot. But we suppose such a result is almost inevitable. In the present case, you should let "the girl" and her husband alone, and wait for a better matrimonial chance. You seem to have a fair degree of intelligence and philosophy, and ought to be a downright good fellow. Therefore, cherish your better feelings, and crush out all animosities and longings for revenge.

RUPHENA.—The terms *lady* and *gentleman* are used so differently in this country from what they are in the aristocratic communities of Europe, it is useless to attempt to found any comparisons on the usage of the two worlds. In the Old World, everybody born above a certain station is a lady or gentleman *by birth*, irrespective of personal character, and independent of personal will or wish. Over there, a vagabond might be made a gentleman in spite of himself, just as he might be forced into the army or navy against his will. Hence it is that in Europe one may meet with persons ranking as gentlemen, and even as noblemen, who show no trace of gentlemanliness in character or conduct, but are unmitigated beasts. In this country, on the contrary, the term "lady" or "gentleman" refers to the *personal* qualities, culture and conduct of the individual. The dictum of Mrs. Gubbins, that "She's a lady who behaves herself as sich," states the pith of the whole matter so far as this country is concerned.

G. H.—"I have been acquainted with a young woman ten years, and engaged to her one year. Everything went smoothly until about three months ago, when she became very strange in her manner towards me. She will not even walk out with me unless it is after dark, or her mother is with her, and treats me as if she were ashamed of me. She refuses any explanation. Please advise me what to do." It is entirely a matter of taste. If you like such a relation to a woman as being engaged to her when she appears to be ashamed of you, it is nobody's business but your own. We should say that any woman ought to be ashamed of a man with so little self-respect.

RALPH.—"I am engaged to be married to a young lady. I asked the consent of her parents, but they are opposed to it. She insists on running away: I am unwilling to do that. What course would you advise me to pursue?" There is no need of running away to get married. If the lady's parents have no solid objection to you, persevere and they will give their consent; and if they have any good cause for their opposition, go to work and remove it.

YOUNG MAN.—"I have always had a desire to go to college; but, since reading the article in your paper, written by President Haven, of the Michigan University, the desire has changed to a resolve. And now what I want to know is this: what preparatory studies will I need before I can enter college?" Consult a catalogue of the college which you wish to enter. You can generally obtain one by writing to the steward of the college.

A CONSTANT READER in trouble. "When a young man proposes to a young lady, and she refuses him, but says she thinks more of him than of any one else, and wishes him to continue his visits, what would you advise him to do?" Our advice to you is to continue your visits. The young lady's declaration is not final; and if you prove yourself worthy, she will, probably, in due time, reconsider her refusal.

M. H.—If you would form the habit of reading the biographies of men who worked their way up from poverty and ignorance to wealth and learning, you would find that the cheering and encouraging effect upon your mind would be very beneficial. When one is working his own way up the hill of advancement, under adverse circumstances, it is encouraging to see how others have made their way before him.

BELLIGERENT.—It would be an act of folly for you to challenge your rival to fight a duel. In all decent communities duelling is as dead as the Dark Ages, and no man can now gain any credit by either sending or accepting a challenge. Go on about your business like a sensible man, and do not allow your rival to provoke you into an act of folly which you would forever regret.

HOBOKEN.—The present Chancellor of the British Exchequer, Disraeli, is a renegade Hebrew, and as such is looked upon with scorn by that peculiar people, the Jews. Although he has abjured the faith of his fathers, it by no means follows that he is a believer in Christianity. His conduct seems to indicate that he is a scoffer at every thing except parliamentary success.

KENTUCKY.—You and the girl to whom you have been engaged, and disengaged, and re-engaged, and then re-disengaged, must be a couple of foolish creatures, without any heart or mind to speak of. The best thing you can do, now, will be to stay disengaged, as it is not at all likely you would ever live happily together. The chances are that you will each find life-companions more suited to you than you would be to one another.

BRETHREN.—The church to which you belong, in common with all other churches, must have some mode prescribed for the adjustment of disputes and differences between its members. Consult your clergyman, or some of your oldest and most sagacious brethren, in regard to the matter, and follow their advice.

G. H.—If the young lady to whom you are engaged acts as though she is ashamed to be seen in company with you, you should terminate the engagement at once. Where shame is, there can be no true love.

J. B. A.—Dr. Watts is the author of the lines:

"Could I in stature reach the clouds,
Or grasp the ocean in my span—
I'd still be measured by my soul,
The mind 's the standard of the man."

CONTESTANTS.—In addressing a man who is a "junior," you put the "Esquire" last, as Abraham Balfour, Jr., Esq. Or if you want to avoid such a doubling of abbreviations, address him as Mr. Abraham Balfour, Jr.

ABSECOM, N. J., wishes to be informed why the sting of a wasp or bee will not hurt a person who holds his breath. We suppose that when a person stops breathing nothing will hurt him.

MOTHERLESS.—Your father's objection to the young man who seeks your hand is sufficient. A person who has been addicted to drunkenness is an unsafe man for any girl to cast her lot with for life.

SLUMBERER.—If you cannot wake up at five o'clock in the morning as your business requires, you should arrange with somebody (say a night watchman) to awaken you at that hour.

UOMNAH.—By consulting some Encyclopedia you can learn all about the origin and tenets of the Shakers

**,* Several letters stand over to be answered in our next*

OUR TERMS.

Single copies, $3 per annum; four copies, $10, which is $2.50 a copy; eight copies, $20. The party who sends us $20 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free*. Postmasters and others who get up clubs, in their respective towns, can afterwards add single copies at $2.50. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage. When a draft or money-order can conveniently be sent, it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail. The postage on the *Ledger* to all parts of the country is only twenty cents a year, or five cents a quarter, payable at the office where the paper is delivered.

☞ We employ no travelling agents. Address all communications to

ROBERT BONNER, Publisher,
No. 90 Beekman street, New York.